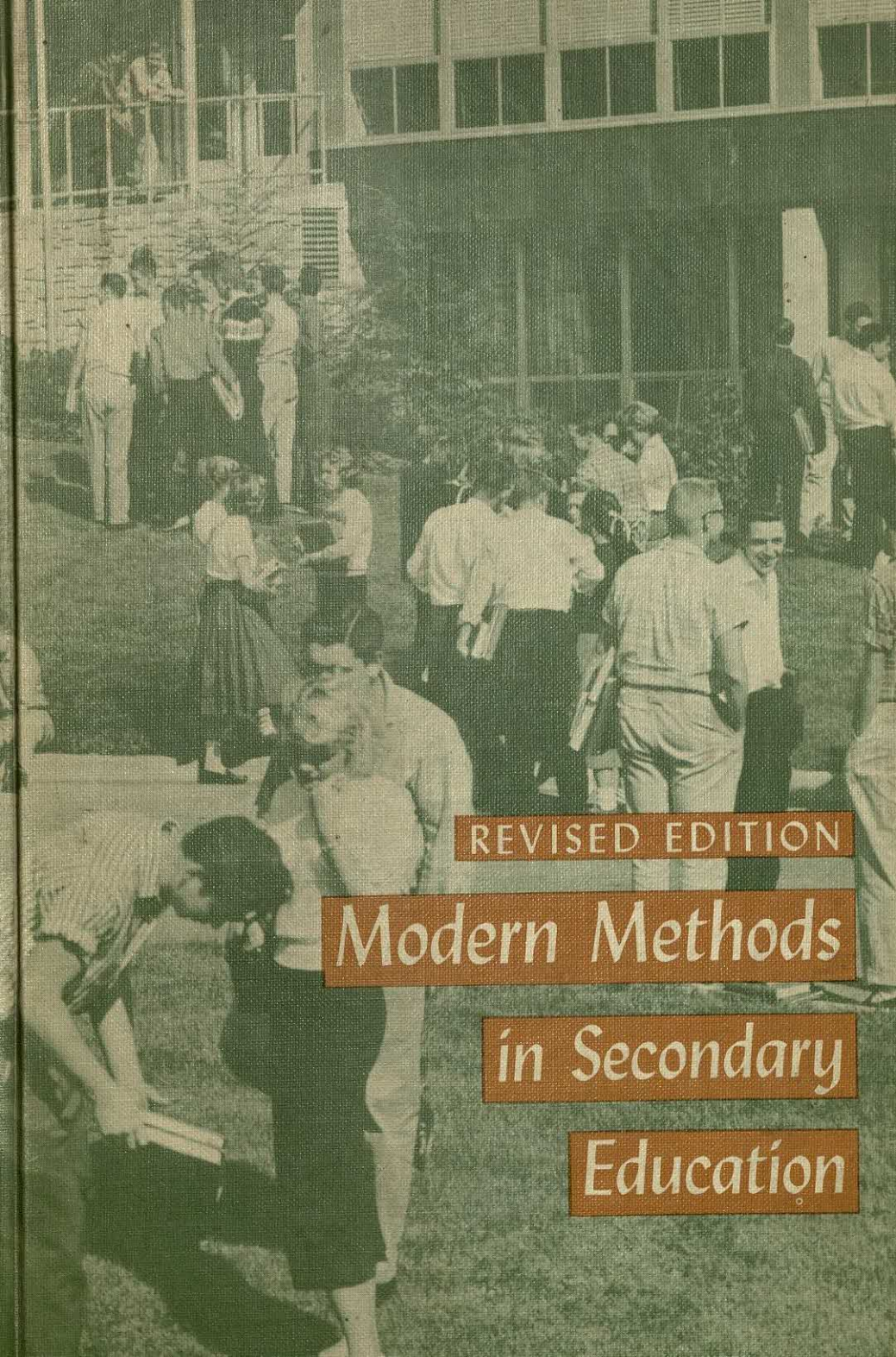




REVISED EDITION

Modern Methods

in Secondary

Education

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REVISED EDITION

Methods in Education

HOLT, RINEHART AND WINSTON

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Preface

IN THE FIRST edition of this book we noted:

In our generation the high school has become the school for all the children of all the people. It is now the "common school," just as the elementary school was the common school in earlier days. The change has been sudden and without parallel in the rest of the world. No other nation comes even close to sending seventy per cent of its youth to secondary schools, hence the American high school has had little precedent to guide its phenomenal growth. And, regardless of precedent, it has had little time to pause and reflect on its role in American life. Yet the high school is slowly and steadily adjusting its structure and its practice to the magnitude of its task.

We need only to change "seventy per cent" to "eighty-five per cent" and this statement of the central task of American secondary education remains valid.

It is true that the effort today is beset with greater stress. Strain has never been absent; it could not be while the task of educating our youth was increasing so rapidly. (Even as late as 1940, the median attainment of the school age population was the eighth grade.) But now, when the immediate survival of our way of life

seems at stake, we want to be certain that the quality of our educational enterprise is as high as we can make it. Understandably we do not all have the same suggestions for insuring this high quality. But we will serve the cause of secondary education best if we accept the fact that all of us desire earnestly to provide a schooling that will enable young men and women to face steadfastly and competently the rigors of the years ahead. We will serve the cause of secondary education best if we are willing to submit what we espouse to objective validation, if we are ready to test alternatives rather than to rely on subjective judgment or *a priori* conviction. So long as we grant each other these sanctions, trusting one another's motivations until the evidence is in, the future of American secondary education will remain secure.

We can be sure that exacting experimentation will strengthen the curriculum, reaffirming, modifying, rejecting both old and new content; we have only to yield some of our reluctance to put conviction to the test. We can gain reassurance on this point if we look at what has happened to methods of teaching. During these years of phenomenal growth in the high school, ways of instruction have changed markedly. At one time high school teaching relied almost exclusively on lectures. Today a great variety of methods are in use, developed from the new insights provided by research. As the heterogeneity of the high school population has increased, this willingness to experiment with new ways of teaching has served secondary education well.

This revised edition, like the first edition, is intended to furnish the practical details of these "modern methods." We have been careful to place "methods" in perspective. We fully recognize that competence in teaching requires the "know what" of academic scholarship and the "know why" of sound values and purposes in proper balance with the "know how" of effective methodology.

We realize now more clearly than ever before how crucial it is to go beyond telling a beginning teacher what he ought to do. We have set for ourselves the inviolable rule that unless we can *show* the young teacher quite concretely "how to do it" we should not even suggest an approach. Nor have we tried to gloss over the hard realities. The ideal teaching situation is still some distance away in most American high schools, and we have not tried to pretend other-

wise. At the same time we can offer the reassurance that every method of teaching described in this volume has been used successfully by beginning teachers in high schools of all sizes and in a great variety of communities.

In this second edition of *Modern Methods in Secondary Education* we have benefited from the generous advice of the users of the first edition. Much material has been added in response to such suggestions: three entirely new chapters begin the book, and the rest have been extensively revised; many have been completely rewritten. At the same time we have been careful to preserve the strengths of the old edition, particularly the explicit "how-to-do-it" discussions.

We are indebted again in this edition to many researchers and to their publishers for generous permission to quote from their findings. We are especially appreciative of the assistance of Miss Dolores M. Sloan, associate editor of *The School Executive*, in securing the illustrations originally published in that periodical. We are grateful to our colleagues and to our students for their continued guidance and support. We all owe a debt to our families, who sustained us during the inevitable travail of writing a book.

March 1958

J.D.G.
W.J.I.
F.K.P.

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Introduction

SOME OF THE BEST and some of the worst people you have ever known have been teachers. And now you want to be a teacher—a good teacher. You want to be remembered by your students as one of the best people they have ever known. But how do you become a good teacher?

You know it takes more than just being a good scholar. You remember teachers who were fine scholars and poor teachers. You know it takes more than just being a good technician. You remember teachers who had all the pedagogical tricks, but just didn't know what they were talking about. So you're clear that you want to know both what you're teaching and how to teach it.

But somehow that doesn't satisfy you. There's more to teaching than that. Maybe if you look at some good teachers with a newly critical eye you can tell. So you watch teachers in action, talk to them, listen to their students, chat with parents, confer with principals. You wonder whether you can come up with the qualities of the ideal teacher.

The very first teacher you visit makes you wonder even more. He's a teacher of history. His name is

Martin Perry

Martin Perry is a quiet, serious young man. He greets you pleasantly enough, but it's clear that his mind is on the class just filing in. You note how smoothly the class begins. The work unfolds in carefully organized form. You can tell that the students have had a part in the way the work has been planned. The wonder is that so many know so clearly what's to be done. Oh, one or two are either confused or uninterested. Mr. Perry moves unobtrusively to get them back to work. He's not 100 per cent successful, but not much misses his quick eye. You watch him work with the students to tie up the work for that day. Not many will leave the class without a pretty clear notion of what was tried and what was gained. A skillful teacher, Mr. Perry.

The classroom

Martin Perry's room is an interesting place. Take a look at the display that one group worked on during the hour. Considerable thought went into its preparation. Did you notice the library corner? That's an inviting array of books and magazines. The research group just finishing left things in good order, too. And did you see that file of resource materials—clippings, pamphlets, pictures? He watches that with a jealous eye. You can see that Martin Perry looks on his room as a kind of laboratory for learning.

The teacher

I've taught United States history for six years now. I plan my work in careful detail. Each year I try to involve my students in new approaches to our old problems. I look for new materials. I invite the students to aid in the search. I plan new activities and get them to carry out the arrangements. Sometimes what we plan turns out to be a disappointment. But we share the blame and try to see how we miscalculated.

I suppose you noticed that I expect everyone to work hard. But I hope you also saw that I don't expect the same kind of work from

everybody. The hard job is to make everyone really reach for his learning without having it hopelessly beyond his grasp. I must say I make some sad mistakes. But I've noticed that so long as there's no doubt that I honestly only want to help students to realize the best that is in them, I can be forgiven for sometimes expecting a little too much.

The student

You know teachers soon get reputations. Mr. Perry has a reputation for being tough but fair. Sometimes I think he's too wrapped up in history. But I'll admit he makes a good case for it. He says we need to know where we've come from as a people in order to know where we ought to go. You'd be surprised at how many he gets stirred up—even some who never cracked a book before.

The parent

I used to think Mr. Perry was too rough on John. John's always done pretty well without trying very hard. So the first report from Mr. Perry came as a considerable shock. He gave John a "D." John was inclined to think that Mr. Perry was just unreasonable. But when Mrs. Sobreski and I went to talk to him, Mr. Perry said that aptitude tests show John's ability in subjects like history to be distinctly superior. Then he showed us some really superior work by some of his students. When we looked at some samples of John's work, we had no argument. Of course, John doesn't either any more. We owe a lot to Mr. Perry.

The principal

Martin Perry is what I like to call an artist-teacher. He knows United States history incredibly well. He gets abiding satisfaction out of arousing some pretty ordinary minds to something like his own passion for facing up to the hard issues we have met and are meeting as a people. Of course, he doesn't like to have anything interfere with his work. Last time I tried to get the president of the

student body out of his class for a meeting, he stormed around for a week. But he is a superb teacher, so I try to overlook his inability to see the importance of some of our out-of-class activities.

* * * * *

Across the hall is a man who teaches general science. His name is

Karl Holt

Karl Holt is less reserved than Martin Perry. He laughs more easily, seems more relaxed about his work. His class doesn't begin with the same promptness and precision. In fact, he seems reluctant to leave the three students who came charging up just as class should have started. But finally class begins. You see that the group is studying the community water supply. Yesterday, apparently, a visitor from the Junior Chamber of Commerce Committee on Fluoridation spoke to the class. Four recorders are waiting to report on what seemed to them the high lights of the talk and the ensuing discussion. Following the summaries, all the students want to talk at once. You note that Mr. Holt is just as interested in developing the ability of the class to hold an organized discussion as he is in getting an account of the issues in fluoridation. But at last some sharp and irreconcilable disagreements appear. Mr. Holt announces that he just happens to have a film strip that may help settle the differences. You note, however, that he seems neither surprised nor aggrieved when differences persist. He reminds the class that the resource committee has scheduled a speaker on the other side of the issue for tomorrow. Perhaps it would help, he says with a smile, to try to state clearly just what the differences are. "Yes," agrees the chairman of the resource committee, "We want to get all the help we can from our visitor tomorrow." The class hasn't quite finished when the bell rings.

The classroom

It's odd that the science classroom of Karl Holt should give less of the appearance of a laboratory than the history classroom of Mar-

tin Perry. Not that Mr. Holt's classroom is disorderly; but it certainly lacks the organized-for-action look of the history room across the hall. In fact, the science room is more like the living room of an easy-going family. A couple of bright, but somewhat inexperienced, watercolors are pinned on the tackboard. (You learn later that some students gave them to Mr. Holt.) There's even a leather den chair in the rear corner—dilapidated but comfortable. (Mr. Holt had a big argument with the principal about that chair, he tells you later.) The equivalent of the family photo album is on a table by the window. It's a scrapbook labeled gaudily "I Knew You When," and filled with pictures and clippings about some of the people taught at one time or another by Mr. Holt.

The teacher

I can't keep up with my work. Martin Perry always has things so well in hand. But every time I sit down to get better organized, a student drops in. Of course, I like to see students, and I think that human-relations skills are just as important as general science knowledge. In fact, you may have noticed that I was trying to show some of them today how to differ with people without trampling all over them. Did you notice that thin boy near the door? That boy needs help. He needs to be convinced that somebody really likes him. You'd be surprised to know how many there are like him. Look at these file folders of mine. Every one represents a boy or a girl that I think maybe I can help. The trouble is, even my evenings are getting invaded. Sometimes my wife, Mary, takes a dim view of that. But really this is my work. I want to use teaching to help these students understand not only basic principles of science, but some basic principles about people—a few basic principles about themselves.

The student

Mr. Holt's a teacher you can turn to when you have trouble. He'll listen to you no matter how busy he is. He's a little slow to offer advice, but somehow he helps you to see what's at the root of your troubles. First thing you know, you've made up your own mind what to do. Sometimes I think we wander a little in class. But we

get there and we learn a lot besides science. He's a good friend to have, Mr. Holt is.

The parent

We all appreciate Karl Holt. He ought to be dean of boys if the school were large enough. He is, unofficially. Sometimes we get a little jealous because our boy will go to him when he won't come to us. But we do feel easier for having him around.

The principal

I'd like it better if I could get Karl Holt to a few committee meetings, but I suppose it's my own fault. I always send him the worst problem youngsters, and I must say he helps more of them get straight than anybody else I've seen. Although he doesn't make all the meetings, he's still good to have on a faculty. He makes for good student morale.

* * * * *

Down on the first floor is the bailiwick of an energetic young woman. Her name is

May Roberts

May Roberts teaches art. She usually appears around the school in a smudged smock. Somehow she's heard about your coming—has the red carpet fully unrolled. She wants you to join a group just starting to discuss a mural design for the cafeteria of the new high school. The high school will not open until the fall, but energetic Miss Roberts has permission from the principal and the board of education to extend this welcome from the old high school to its new sibling. She says that the new student body may want to substitute its own mural a little later, but meanwhile this ought to add warmth and color to the raw newness of the school. You join the

group, and the students tell you their ideas to date. You offer a few suggestions, which they feel free to view with a critical eye. Meanwhile, you notice that some of the students are earnestly working on projects that seem very important to them—watercolors, work in ceramics, design sketches. One whole group seems to be discussing some home-decorating plans. Miss Roberts moves purposefully among the different groups. Her voice is low and firm when it is heard. But often she says nothing for minutes at a time. She seems only to come near some members of the class if they ask for help. May Roberts must be tired at the end of the day.

The classroom

The classroom gets rather cluttered before the hour is over. But a few minutes before the bell rings, all hands pitch in and restore order. There's a very nice Roberts Art Gallery, which, you're told, changes every week. One work by an established artist is flanked by several student pieces. One table holds a model of a house designed by that group you saw discussing home decorating so earnestly. The rear wall is completely covered with a kind of burlap, which, in turn, is covered almost completely from floor to ceiling with abstract designs, sketches of men's and women's clothing, silk-screen prints, and plans for home landscaping. You can see that Miss Roberts has a catholic concept of the role of the art teacher.

The teacher

You probably think I'm running a kind of three-ring circus. And I'll admit that there are days when I wish I still taught as I did during my first years. Then, everybody worked on the same kind of project. It was easier to manage, but it grew increasingly unsatisfactory. Gradually, as I grew more experienced, I branched out in the number of activities I could permit to go on at the same time. But I want you to remember that it took me a long time. You see—art should belong to all kinds of students. Every student has feelings about the line, shape, color, sound, and texture of things. He needs a chance to express those feelings in ways other than just with words. And he needs a chance to mature in his feelings. At first his expres-

sions, whatever the medium, will be pretty primitive. But given both tolerance and guidance, he will grow. He will have better taste in his home, his automobile, his clothes. Often, he will develop enough skill to afford him a creative outlet as long as he lives. The important thing I want to do is to make aesthetic appreciation and expression a normal, natural part of everyday living. The professional artist will never be properly valued in our culture until ordinary people realize some of their own artistry—however limited.

The student

This is an elective course, you know. Very popular, too. That's mostly because of Miss Roberts. She isn't arty—you know what I mean? I mean she treats drawing or painting—all that we do in here—without any big build-up. She just encourages us to go ahead and try our hand. Seems to expect us to be able to do something. And you know the funny thing is we all do find something we can do—after some stumbling around, that is. I'm no artist. I mean I'd never try to make a living at it. But let me show you the silk screen I did for the play poster.

The parent

I didn't want Ray to take that art course. I told him it would be all right if he had plenty of room in his program, but he doesn't. I want him to take some practical courses. We're not at all sure Ray can go on through college—though we'll try to get him started anyway. And if he has to go to work, he ought to have a few salable skills. But he insisted anyway—and I guess he was right. We hear more about that art course than about anything else he's ever done in school. He's even picked up a few dollars doing landscape plans for customers of the nursery on Fourth Street.

The principal

She's a dynamo, isn't she? I used to think of artists as kind of other-worldly. You know—floating around in private clouds. But May

Roberts fixed that little idea of mine. Even persuaded me to let her students re-do my office. How do you like it?

* * * * *

One more teacher you must visit before you draw up specifications for that ideal teacher. She is

Mrs. Jane McGregor

Mrs. McGregor is a mathematics teacher. You could spend an hour watching her teach, but that isn't really necessary. She's a competent teacher, but not extraordinary. But talk to her in the corridor between classes. Notice how every teacher who walks by brightens when he sees her. Listen carefully as she talks. She's well-informed about school affairs. She can tell you more about student activities than most students. And I wish you could watch her at a school football game. She's the school's number one rooter.

The classroom

There isn't anything very remarkable about Mrs. McGregor's classroom. On the bulletin board she has posted some school notices and bulletins. During the height of the football season, there was a graph with the scores of the opposing teams. But her room is not one to catch the eye of the casual visitor. It's neat and orderly—but ordinary.

The teacher

You'd think I had been here for a long time. But it's really been only four years. I felt this way, though, almost from the start. I felt that I belonged here—that the school's problems were my problems and the school's successes, at least in part, were my successes. I've been very active in teacher affairs, and so I got to know all the teachers quickly. And I have a considerable interest in student gov-

ernment, which has involved me in most student activities in one way or another. I feel about this school and its teachers and students almost as intensely as I do about my own family.

The student

Mrs. McGregor is not a bad teacher. But the thing we like about her most is her interest in school activities. She watches all our games, comes to our plays, attends the school dances. They always make the new teachers sponsor one of the classes. She's as good a sponsor as the juniors have ever had. Some teachers act as though school activities were a nuisance. But not Mrs. McGregor.

The parent

Our daughter, Cecilia, is a junior. She has a pride in her class and her school which she never had before. All the juniors seem to feel the same way. We know Mrs. McGregor is responsible. We were also impressed when we talked to Mrs. McGregor at the Open House. When we inquired about the school bond election, she knew exactly what was involved. We wish every parent could know her.

The principal

Now here is one teacher who appreciates the importance of getting reports in on time. And I can always count on her help with the extra jobs so many teachers try to avoid. Teaching is more than a job to Mrs. McGregor; it's a career. If I had more teachers like her working actively in the PTA, we wouldn't worry about public support.

The Ideal Teacher

So you mull over what you have seen and heard and felt. Can you say now which is the ideal teacher? Probably not. Instead, you come to think that rarely, if ever, does one teacher combine all the

qualities desired in teachers. Each of these teachers has some important strengths and some weaknesses. And it may be better that way. Students come in an infinite variety of temperaments and talents. Comparable variety is needed in teachers.

What kind of teacher will you be? It should be reassuring to know that you can be a good teacher without exemplifying perfectly all the qualities you hear teachers ought to have. Certainly you will not feel equally at home with all that is described in this book. Some techniques and procedures you will master early and well. Some you will take years to handle with modest competence. So long as you fully respect the several roles of the teacher—as director of learning, as counselor, as liaison between school and community, as a member of the profession—you need not be a paragon in every role. It is only when, in order to cover your own feeling of inadequacy, you deny that one of the roles exists that you invite discontent. You will be better satisfied with teaching if you face your limitations honestly, reducing them in some measure over the years, than if you deride all strengths in teaching except your own. Viewed in this light, your teaching will gather strength from your fellow teachers from the beginning and so long as you teach.

You and the High School

What Was High School Like for You?

"That's a cinch," Mack Sprague said. He put down his coke and looked at the other would-be high school teachers around the table.

"I can tell you what high school was like for me. It was regimentation. Do you know what I mean? I went to a big place, more like a factory than a school. Teachers? They were foremen on a production line. I never was a person to them. Just one thirtieth or one thirty-fifth of a classroom."

Kitty Beaman frowned. "I went to a big high school, too, and it wasn't that way at all." Bill Janowitz nodded agreement.

Kitty said, "High school wasn't a factory. It was fun—most of the time, anyway. I had teachers who were human. Two or three of them were really great."

Charley Hennick, the old-timer, had been silent. Now he spoke up. "You kids are close enough to high school to remember what it was like. Not me. When I try to think back to my high school, it's all sort of general and blurred. I remember friendships and sports. But for the life of me I can't tell you about a single teacher who stands out as being 'good' or 'bad.' It was just a part of my life I got through, I guess."

MOST OF US REMEMBER high school one way or another. Even if we do not recall specific incidents in detail, we have feelings about

the experience. After all, our high school years were a sizable part of our young lives.

High school was more than brick-and-mortar, more than classrooms, corridors, and playing fields. It was a fabric of human lives, sometimes colorful and pleasant, sometimes drab, sometimes rough or threadbare. Depending on people, the organization of the high school **could** be rich, varied, and stimulating, or it could be the inflexible, impersonal routine that Mack Sprague remembered as "regimentation."

Teachers are the key people in our high schools. We sensed this fact when we were high school students, even if we did not fully understand its meaning. What high school was like for us depended mightily on the teachers we had. Each of us in various ways carries the mark of teachers who helped or failed to help us in high school.

Looking backward, we remember some of our high school teachers more vividly than others. Sometimes we retain the simple categorical judgments we made when we were younger. This teacher lives in our memory as "good," that one as "bad."

Here's one recollection:¹

He seemed hesitant, shy, and in general unsure of himself . . . that is, until he came into the classroom. He knew his work, was proud of it in a way that spread to every student, and by his actions he set an example that most of the boys tried to imitate. Despite his shyness, he soon was on friendly terms with everyone. The classroom was always open, and it seemed a logical place to congregate after school; he never seemed to press, or lecture, or scold, or find fault. . . . As a matter of fact, he always seemed too busy to be sure just what was going on; that is, until you were in trouble, and then he just happened to be handy.

I never thought of him much, except as a likable teacher, until I had to leave school and go to work. Then one night he stopped by the house . . . just happened to be going by, wondered how I was making out. Before he left I'd promised to look into a course they were giving at a night school fifteen miles away. A trade, he said, might come in handy. His casual visits kept me plugging for five years, night after night.

Or, in contrast, this remembrance:

He ruled the class with an iron hand, aided by a voice that boomed and a glance that was capable of reducing one's temperature to absolute

¹ The three recollections presented here are drawn from case studies prepared by Secondary Education students at New York University.

zero. His homework assignments were voluminous. During class period, he visited each student in turn and inspected assignments. He employed pencils of various colors for marking papers. Many a pupil's paper might easily have been mistaken for a piece of modern art after being graded. Margins had to be just so wide, spaces just so large, and paragraphs just so long. Mr. Creach was a rigid disciplinarian and a strong adherent of the educational philosophy of "You'll learn or else—and MY way!" My reaction was to give him exactly what he asked for and no more. I wouldn't dare risk it.

One final portrait:

Miss Borgman is the teacher I remember. She was a tall woman. But her sharp nose and keen eyes were what marked her. She was always interested, interesting, and enthusiastic about her subject, art. She liked watercolors, and whenever she went on a trip she came back with a whole show. She would show her pictures to us, and talk about the paintings and the trip in such a way—well, you'd make up your mind that you were going to pack your own paints and be off to Mexico or France. We didn't go that far, but we *did* start to paint. One time we would go down along the beach, another time to the industrial section of town.

She would criticize our efforts, but in such a way that we always wanted to try again. A group of us evolved from those coming back after school for criticism. We held together all through high school. It got so we would meet in her classroom after school just to see what each one was doing, and to listen to Borgy, as we called her privately, talk about the work. Most of the rest of the school was quiet, dark, and empty when we finally went home. . . .

What was high school like for you? Looking back on it, what were its high and low moments? Who were the teachers that really counted for you? Why?

Perhaps, as you think back to your time in high school, you will wonder how your teachers felt about their work. How do you suppose high school—students, subject matter, other teachers, the administration—looked to *them*? How do you suppose the teachers you look back on as "good," "poor," or "so-so" felt about themselves?

How Do You Feel about Becoming a High School Teacher?

A few people seem to approach their careers without a doubt in the world. For most of us, however, deciding on our lifework is a

somewhat complicated business. We weigh pros and cons. We are pushed by some factors in our lives and pulled by others. Our motivation usually is not single. In the end we work out a decision that we hope will balance these motivations, factors, and arguments in a happy fashion.

Self-questioning is a natural part of this process. If our decisions are to be realistic, we ask ourselves such questions as these:

At its best, what is this vocation?

Is this a vocation in which I can perform effectively?

What are the difficulties I am likely to encounter?

Will I be able to cope with such difficulties?

What satisfactions and rewards will I find in this career?

How can I learn to achieve them?

Obviously, a crystal ball would be needed to answer such questions with complete assurance. So most of us, while pushing ahead toward a career, still are troubled by doubts. In the right proportion, such doubts are normal and healthy. They help focus the light of realism on our decisions. They throw our plans into a perspective that takes account of our abilities, our values, and the obstacles and opportunities that lie ahead.

Teaching is not a second-best career. Like learning, it is integral to life itself, and intelligent human existence would be inconceivable without it. Shaw perpetrated a misleading and cruel canard in his glib comment that "He who can, does. He who cannot, teaches." In all humility, the teacher would answer, "He who can, teaches; for mankind's sake, he must."

Deciding to become a high school teacher on these terms involves you in a major step. If you are wise, you scan the ground ahead, sizing up the goals that seem right to you, the difficulties you may encounter, the rewards you will look for, the knowledge and skill you will need.

As seen by college students preparing to teach, some of the hardest parts of the high school teacher's job are:

Striving for the ideals of democratic education while faced by public apathy, neglect, provincialism.

Winning the confidence and respect of students while remaining their friend.

The teacher has many roles in satisfying the expectations of parents, of boys and girls, of principals, and of others. Not the least of these roles is that of being "the one who knows."

Good teachers are usually humble about this particular role. The more one knows the more one becomes aware of how much has yet to be learned—and of how difficult it is to satisfy the intense curiosity of young people about the world around them.

But although good teachers may be humble about their special knowledge and skill, they are positive about what genuine competence requires. For the effective teacher, method and content are two aspects of one indivisible process. The knowledge he possesses and the practices he adopts to impart it are not separated in the classroom, however distinct they may appear to be during the period of learning to become a teacher.

The teachers shown here must have competence in both the "what" and the "how" of their subjects. Their pupils would get small benefit from their knowledge if they could not teach it, or from their methods of teaching if they had little knowledge of music and cooking. At the same time, the relation of method to content is somewhat unusual in both of these subjects. How does it differ from the relation of content to method in your special subjects and how will you adapt method to content in your classes? *[Photos courtesy Standard Oil Co., N. J.]*





In recent years American school architects have been developing new ideas about the way in which school buildings should be designed. All their innovations have sprung from a realization of the important relationship between building design and the developmental tasks of boys and girls, from an approach to the adolescent as a human being, not as a "machine for learning," and from a desire to create high schools in which boys and girls can live and learn as whole persons.

These architectural innovations demonstrate more than the importance of school design. They are also symptoms of a deeper understanding of the nature of adolescence and the purpose of education. Personal and intellectual development travel hand-in-hand in these new buildings. Space for both kinds of maturing is provided in some new high schools by enlarging corridors so that they serve as something more than traffic lanes. Here students can visit between classes, discussing the important concerns of "growing up."

Such a corridor provides room, light, and a view of the outdoors. It may also provide space for chairs and tables, exhibits of student work, and activities. Some recent high schools include a large lounge room or "commons" to serve these purposes.

There are many other changes in old-fashioned design that reflect the new realization of the relationship between where one learns and what one learns. Perhaps this sunlit corridor will suggest changes in schools you know. *[Photo courtesy Keokuk Senior High School and Community College, Perkins & Will, Architects-Engineers]*

Finding a means of communicating with an entire class despite differences in personality, background, and interest.

Dealing with limitations of time and large classes.

Solving or avoiding problems of discipline.

Motivation: arousing a desire to learn among all students.

Helping students to think for themselves.

Understanding students.

What would you add to such a list or subtract from it? Perhaps these concerns seem too abstract or high-minded to you. What gripes have you heard teachers express most often?

In a recent study over four hundred classroom teachers were asked about "conditions and circumstances which prevented them from doing their best teaching."² Teachers listed barriers to good teaching in four categories: in the classroom, in the school, in the community, and in personal factors.

In the classroom, barriers to good teaching frequently cited were "interruptions," poor facilities, and confusion over scholastic standards.

A main barrier to good teaching within the school was noise. Other difficulties mentioned here were too much money-collecting, nonintegration of socioeconomic groups within the school, and "no real group feeling" among the staff.

Within the community, teachers feared being misunderstood by parents and patrons. Teachers felt impeded by "low esteem of teaching profession," lack of understanding of the problems of teaching, and the rigid community social structure.

Barriers to good teaching arising from personal factors included conflict between home responsibilities and after-hour school duties, fear of not pleasing children's parents, and financial worries. Some of these teachers said they found "no gestures of encouragement" and "no place to take personal or professional problems."

To what extent do you feel that these difficulties are real? What are the facts for today and tomorrow about classroom conditions? About facilities in which to teach? About the needs and behavior of teen-age boys and girls? About salaries? About the high school teacher's place in the community?

² Clinton R. Prewett, "Let's Remove the Barriers to Good Teaching," *The School Executive*, 75:83-85, May 1956.

Your feelings about becoming a high school teacher will have an increasingly realistic basis as you find factual answers to these questions. Unknown difficulties are the hardest for us to master, because we encounter them unprepared. As we identify and assess difficulties in advance, we take an important step toward managing them.

It is equally important to preview the satisfactions and rewards you may reasonably find in high school teaching. An assessment of satisfactions, as well as difficulties, helps form a realistic foundation for your feelings about entering a teaching career. Some college students have foreseen the following satisfactions in their future work as high school teachers:

To stimulate growth and an awakening on the part of the student to the worlds that he as an individual may enter.

To discover that some attitudes and appreciations as well as some skills and knowledge have reached a few students.

To be gratified by the interest and development on the part of students both in specific subject matter and in general understanding of human and world values.

To play a part in readying young people for life in a complex, perplexing society.

To help make the growing generation better than the one that preceded it.

To bring solace and comfort to troubled youngsters.

To have the day-to-day rewards—when students react—seem stimulated—even inspired.

What is your reaction to such statements? Perhaps they, too, seem abstract and too idealistic. Or do they strike a responsive note in you?

All these comments have a strain of high belief. They bespeak a hopeful confidence that the act of teaching yields solid rewards in the sense of worthy contribution on the part of those who teach. They assume that teaching is not a mechanical or second-best job, but an art in which the medium is human life itself. They reflect positive answers to the questions one great teacher has asked:

Can anyone really teach without marveling at the creative power of individual children and youth as their unique personalities unfold, so to speak, and present us with new ideas and creative achievements? Can

anyone administer a school without being moved by seeing a beginning teacher respond to faith and inspiration, overcome obstacles, and become a creative leader?³

As you prepare to teach in high school, it is natural that you should have both misgivings and high hopes. Good teachers have always aimed high and yet have carried with them a sense of the difficulty of their task.

To some commentators, the role of the true teacher today seems too demanding. David Riesman, for one, warns teachers not to feel that they must be "omnicompetent," capable of giving all needed help to all students.⁴ That way, says Riesman, leads to a sense of failure, frustration, and, finally, cynicism, since it is not possible for every teacher to be expert in subject matter, counseling, psychotherapy, and a myriad of other competencies. Riesman suggests that we cut back our expectations of teachers so that they will see their function and satisfaction in terms of expert presentation of subject matter.

Other commentators disagree. They see boys and girls as more than machines for learning. They view boys and girls as people whose learning depends on self-knowledge, on developing maturity, on the acquisition of humane values. These commentators see the teacher as inevitably faced by, and learning to deal with, boys and girls as people, not merely so many intellects.

In this view, teachers understand that:

. . . the learner's life at school and his relationships with his instructors and his peers have a profound psychological impact on his way of life. The school is second only to the home as a place where the social forces which influence a child's attitudes toward himself and others are concentrated. The fact is that whether or not teachers accept the psychological implications of this . . . they already are practicing psychology hour after hour in their daily contacts with young people. The learner's life at school is heavily invested with success and failure, pride and shame. All the teacher's relationships with his pupils, the feelings he has toward them, the judgments he passes on them, the ways in which he rewards and punishes, praises and blames, acknowledges and ignores are charged with psychological meaning. . . .

³ Ernest O. Melby, *The Education of Free Men* (Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh, 1955), p. 65.

⁴ David Riesman, "Thoughts on Teachers and Schools," *The Anchor Review*, No. 1, p. 50.

Every teacher is in his own way a psychologist. Everything he does, says, or teaches has or could have a psychological impact. What he offers helps children to discover their resources and their limitations. He is the central figure in countless situations which can help the learner to realize and accept himself or which may bring humiliation, shame, rejection, and self-disparagement.⁵

What *are* the responsibilities, difficulties, and rewards of high school teaching? How do you feel about the career you are preparing to enter? You may find it useful to talk about these questions. Friends, others in your class, and teachers now on the job in high schools may provide facts and impressions that will help you see more clearly the nature of your lifework. Reading can provide background that will aid you in clarifying your own point of view and feelings. It may be helpful for you to try such divergent writers as Jacques Barzun, Earl Kelley, Robert Hutchins, Harold Taylor, Bernard Iddings Bell, Marie Rasey, Robert J. Havighurst, Margaret Mead, and Arthur Bestor.

Learning to Be a "Good" High School Teacher

To teach in the high schools of today and tomorrow is an important assignment. And the plain fact is that this is not an easy assignment. Considering his responsibilities, it is just as necessary for a teacher to prepare professionally as it is for a doctor, an engineer, or any other specialist. In the United States, we have increasingly recognized this and have developed programs of teacher education to help prospective teachers gain the skills and understanding essential to teaching competence.

A landmark study by the American Council on Education had this to say:

The real issue is not whether there should be teacher education but of what it should consist. If the education of teachers is poorly accomplished, then the teachers, on the average, will do an inferior job. If the teachers do poorly the children must suffer. And society, for its own sake,

⁵ Arthur T. Jersild, *In Search of Self* (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1952), pp. 7, 125.

dare not permit this. Teacher education makes a difference. And it makes a difference what teacher education is.⁶

What you encounter in any specific program of preparation for high school teaching may vary with the college you attend. But it seems clear that, in becoming a good high school teacher, there are at least three main areas of development that will be helpful to you.

First, you will find it of lifelong importance to gain a broad acquaintance with our culture and its problems. This is a task college helps you with, but it is a responsibility each intelligent person carries throughout his life.

Second, it will be constantly helpful for you to have secured special content preparation of two kinds. As a high school teacher, mastery of a subject-matter specialization will be essential. This is part of the stimulation you will bring to boys and girls.

There is no substitute for keenness in, and enthusiasm about, a field of man's knowledge. But there is another kind of content that will aid you in being an effective high school teacher. This content lies in courses and other experiences that will help you know and understand the problems of adolescents as they grow up in our society. You will find it useful to have courses that help you understand adolescents in terms of their family life, their problems of physical development, their peer relations, their questions of vocational choice, and their school experiences.

Third, it is crucial for you to be able to apply your general and special education in effective teaching. As you enter high school teaching, it will be important for you to have a grounding in such professional skills as:

Helping youth develop and understand their own values.

Meeting the emotional needs of youth.

Working effectively with groups as well as with individual boys and girls.

Using instructional materials and aids creatively.

Evaluating instruction.

The simple fact is that it takes a lot of learning to be an effective

⁶ *Teachers for Our Times: A Statement of Purposes by the Commission on Teacher Education* (Washington, D. C.: American Council on Education, 1944), p. 23.

high school teacher. This is a learning task you can undertake and accomplish, at least in part, in your pre-service teacher education. This book, for example, treats directly and in practical fashion with methods you will find helpful on the job. It is based on an understanding of boys and girls and a view of the teacher as an educated, creative guide of learning.

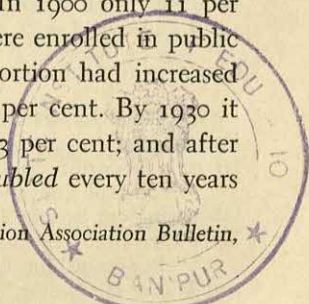
But the effective high school teacher does not stop here. One of his articles of faith is that no amount of pre-service education can give him all the answers that the daily complex life of the school demands. Therefore, the teacher never stops learning. As he enters teaching, he realizes that this is really only the beginning of his growth as a guide for boys and girls. It is the hallmark of the "good" teacher that he continues as a student—of himself, of boys and girls, of the subjects in which he specializes, of his community, of his nation, and of the world.

Secondary Education: The Challenge of Unfinished Business

As a high school teacher, you will be part of one of the most dynamic, changing, challenging forces in American life. The American high school is a unique institution of democracy. We are the first nation in the world to say that all the children of all our people may have a secondary education at public expense. The zeal with which we have dedicated ourselves to this proposition sometimes seems to outstrip our ability to cope with its full meaning and consequences.

As a result of our zeal, the high school in America has exhibited astounding growth, especially in this century. In 1900 only 11 per cent of the nation's youth of high school age were enrolled in public high schools and academies. By 1910 this proportion had increased to 15 per cent. By 1920 the proportion was 32 per cent. By 1930 it was over 50 per cent. By 1940 it had risen to 73 per cent; and after 1950 it rose above 85 per cent.⁷ Enrollments *doubled* every ten years

⁷ "Schools and the 1950 Census," *National Education Association Bulletin*, 24:164-165, December 1951.



from 1880 to 1930 and continued to increase until 1940. During the forties, high school enrollment tended to decline, due to World War II and the slackened birth rate of the depression years. But enrollment began to rise again during the fifties, accelerating with dramatic swiftness as more and more of the World War II babies reached high school age.

At mid-century, our nation is in the midst of gigantic growth whose future dimensions we are only beginning to perceive. For example, our population as a whole is growing at a startling rate. In 1956 the United States population passed the 168,000,000 mark, an increase of well over 90,000,000 since 1900. Between 1950 and 1955 the number of children under fourteen increased by almost 20 per cent. The annual birth rate stood at 25 babies per 1000 persons; over 4,000,000 were being born each year. Conservative predictions for the future population of our nation sustained this picture of growth. It was estimated that the population would rise to 220,000,000 by 1975, an increase of nearly 60,000,000 over 1955.⁸

At the same time, changes in technology and in our mode of living are everywhere at hand and in prospect. Research and economic development on a massive scale are opening new frontiers for us.⁹

Growth and change are the order of today and tomorrow. Our way of life is in swift transition. Boys and girls of today will live as adults in a world whose features and potentialities are different almost beyond imagining from what we have previously known.

In the midst of this growth and change, the American high school stands committed to provide secondary education for every son and daughter in the land. Between 1955 and 1965 the number of American boys and girls aged fifteen to seventeen will have increased by approximately 60 per cent. The 7,680,000 students enrolled in all our high schools in 1955 will have increased to nearly 12,000,000 by 1965.¹⁰ And the end of the increase will not even then be in sight. Changes in technology, production, and our way of living will present

⁸ "Huge Impact Seen in Growth of U.S.," *The New York Times*, p. 56, December 18, 1955. See also Peter Drucker, "America's Next Twenty Years," *Harper's Magazine*, 210:27-32, March 1955.

⁹ You will find an absorbing description of the ways scientific research is influencing our lives in *The Mighty Force of Research* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1956) by the Editors of *Fortune* magazine.

¹⁰ Benjamin Fine, "School and College Enrollment Has Risen to 40,000,000 and Worse Is Coming," *The New York Times*, September 18, 1955.

the American high school with a further challenge. These changes will require new skills and understandings on the part of young Americans. Our high schools must decide whether, how, and on what terms they will teach these needed skills and understandings.

These are some problems of today and tomorrow. The fact that the high school is a central institution of American life, and the fact that our life is growing and changing, make it likely that secondary education itself will grow and change greatly during your professional career.

At the same time, our high schools will inherit the unsolved problems of the past. Some of these unsolved problems—whose solution will inevitably be affected by the factors of future growth and change—are the following:

What should secondary education be?

Although as a people we have committed ourselves to the idea of universal high school education, we have not agreed on what such a broad commitment means. Perhaps this is as it should be. But it is a fact that we are still seeking a definition. One educator has put it this way:

Is secondary education only a series of academic disciplines for a selected few? We have rejected that. Shall only those youths be graduated from our high schools who have a flair for the traditional program of studies? No. We want a school in which every youth is realizing his individual potential, and all youths are growing into responsible, mature persons or valuable citizens.

There is far more agreement as to what marks the mature citizen than as to what part the secondary school should play in the maturing process. There is agreement that today's world demands people who have more knowledge, have more and better skills, have more resistance to propaganda, can communicate better, have more understanding of distant and different people, and feel a loyalty based on critical understanding of the American governmental, economic, and social structure. It is the process by which these are developed or acquired that is in great dispute.¹¹

How can our high schools best deal with the fact that all teenagers, far from being the same, differ individually, and come from differing social, ethnic, and economic backgrounds?

The high school in the United States began as an institution

¹¹ Archibald B. Shaw and John Lyons Reid, "The Random Falls Idea," *The School Executive*, March 1956, reprint, p. 7.

essentially designed to serve the college-preparation needs of middle-class children. In contrast, today, boys and girls enter high school from every stratum of society. Curriculum has become broader and more complex. But it remains a fact that children from less privileged backgrounds find our high schools least accepting of, or adapted to, their needs. Warner, Havighurst, and Loeb have stated this problem forcefully in asking *Who Shall Be Educated?*¹²

Seeing boys and girls of lower socioeconomic status failing to adapt in our high schools, some observers recommend abandoning the policy of universal secondary education. Indeed, such boys and girls account for the greatest proportion of high school "drop-outs" before graduation. If population pressure on the schools increases and the school program remains static, we can expect additional voices to demand that the high school exclude those "who cannot do the work." Other observers, on the other hand, speak out for maintenance of our ideal of secondary education. Only through creative application of this ideal, they say, can we prevent our society from becoming rigidly stratified, with an upper elite of the "educated" and a great lower group of the excluded "uneducated." These observers demand that we adapt the high school to the potentialities of all children, not principally those of middle-class backgrounds.

How can the high school curriculum better meet the needs of all our citizens for certain common learnings?

Over the years the high school has sought to meet the diverse needs of its students by adding electives to its curriculum, by establishing two- and three-"track" programs, and by other devices. In this process—and unwittingly—efforts at enrichment have sometimes resulted in fragmentation of the high school experience for boys and girls. The high school schedule is likely to resemble a cross between a layer and a marble cake, with the ingredients of unity and continuity somehow missing. Yet all the boys and girls who attend high school have this in common: They are human, and they are citizens. There are, therefore, certain learnings they need in common, both for decent human relations and good citizenship. Although it is im-

¹² W. L. Warner, Robert J. Havighurst, and Martin B. Loeb, *Who Shall Be Educated? The Challenge of Unequal Opportunities* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1944).

portant to allow for differences in the high school program, it appears equally important to provide for common learnings. The question, still unanswered in American high schools, is *how*?

What form of organization should secondary education have?

There is no agreement, and perhaps there never will be, about the structure and organization that is most appropriate to "secondary education." Neither is there agreement about what years of education may rightly be designated as those of the "high school." The traditional high school organization in the United States has provided four years of instruction, from the ninth through the twelfth grade. In 1954, nearly 43 per cent of all high schools in the United States were of this type. At the same time, over 36 per cent of the high schools were six-year institutions, providing instruction from the seventh through the twelfth grade. The remaining public high schools were of the 3-3 type. Junior high schools, constituting nearly 14 per cent of all secondary institutions, provided instruction in grades seven through nine. Separate senior high schools, constituting over 7 per cent of the total number of secondary institutions in the United States, usually provided instruction in grades ten through twelve.¹³

Although the 8-4, 6-6, and 6-3-3 forms of organization have been most common, experimentation with other forms of secondary organization has occurred. A number of communities, interested in the possibilities of community or junior colleges, have experimented with 6-3-3-2, 8-4-2, and 6-6-2 arrangements, offering public education at the thirteenth and fourteenth grade levels. Some communities have adopted a 6-4-4 plan, based on a six-year elementary school, a four-year high school, and a four-year junior college including grades eleven through fourteen. The varieties of organization to be found, and the different grades included in the secondary programs of various public school systems, present a picture of a form of education still seeking its correct design and striving to meet the diverse demands of widely differing communities in our nation.

You will encounter many other unsolved problems in secondary education. Those mentioned here merely suggest—as do the problems

¹³ Rudyard K. Bent and Harry H. Kronenberg, *Principles of Secondary Education* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1955), p. 7.

of the future—that high school teaching will take you into one of the most important and controversial areas of American life. During your professional career, important decisions will be hammered out in secondary education, affecting the lives of the American people. You will be at the heart of things in a very real sense. As a citizen-teacher you will have a keen concern about the decisions that are made. You will realize that your work, and that of others in our high schools, will significantly affect the kind of nation we become. To have a hand in such work, and in helping to settle the many problems that arise from it, should give you a sense of taking part in history as it is made.

“Know What,” “Know Why,” and “Know How”

As a veteran of high school experience—a former student—you can look back on the high school’s human content. You will remember the teachers who “counted,” the ones you would rather forget, the things you learned or failed to learn, and why. As you look forward to high school teaching, you have mixed feelings about the prospect. Some of the feelings are the natural qualms of the beginner; some are the ideals and hopes and plans that sustain teaching and make it, at its best, both a service and an art. If you are realistic, you know that good teaching is a demanding profession, in which, now and later, you must remain a learner because the task is as infinitely complex as the people it involves. Realism, too, leads you to preview what you will find when you begin to teach, what the high school, its boys and girls, its staff, will be like. You see your profession in the broad context of today and tomorrow, realizing that secondary education is part of our people’s great unfinished business. You have a sense of challenge as you consider the job ahead.

At the same time, you will be wiser for being aware of some of the criticisms that have been leveled at secondary education in recent years.¹⁴ These criticisms invite evaluation and careful judgment about

¹⁴ See the excellent compilation of criticism edited by C. Winfield Scott and Clyde M. Hill, *Public Education under Criticism* (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1954).

how much they should affect your own preparation to teach in high school.

One body of criticism alleges that high school teachers are ill prepared in subject matter, that they have too little "know what" in their teaching. Another body of criticism claims just the reverse: that too many high school teachers overestimate subject matter, piling up facts until they become a "mind-crushing" load.

Widely differing critics claim that there is too little "know why" in high school teaching. Although these critics would disagree among themselves about what the "why" of education is, they often agree that high school teaching lacks a sense of broad values, of purpose, of direction and continuity. They see high school teaching as preoccupied with details that are largely unrelated to the higher purposes of man's life. Such critics sometimes allege that our high schools teach a great deal about "trees" without ever bringing the "forest" into view.

There are, finally, critics who allege that there is either too much or too little emphasis on "know how" in our high school teaching. These critics variously take high school teachers to task for being preoccupied with methods of teaching, or for being woefully ill prepared in teaching techniques.

Actually, of course, the crucial task of the person who wishes to become an effective high school teacher is to achieve a genuine balance among "know what," "know why," and "know how." A teacher must be less than effective who does not have an adequate background of knowledge, not only about the subject matter he is expected to teach, but also about the learning process, about human development, and about related matters. Neither can a teacher who lacks insight into the "know why" of education and life be fully effective. In a free society we do not demand a conformity of answers to the question, Why? But each teacher bears an ultimate responsibility for keeping the question constantly in view for himself and for those he professes to teach. Nor can the balance be complete without the component of competence in method. The truly competent teacher has a healthy, lasting respect and eagerness for "know how," the more practical the better. What good are knowledge and insight without the practical skills for learning and teaching them?

By focusing on practical methods of teaching that have been

proved in the classroom, this book aims to help you gain practical "know how" for good teaching in the high school. A word of caution may, however, be in order. There is now a "how to" book on almost every conceivable subject, as well as on some that are hard to conceive. There is *How to Be a Sleuth* for the would-be investigator; *How to Sleep Successfully* for the insomniac; *How to Read a Book* for the middle-brow; and so on down a mighty and various list that includes *How to Enjoy Yourself*, and even a book entitled *How to Attend a Conference*. One book includes a whole chapter on "What to Do When You Want to Get Rid of People." We want answers to so many problems—preferably tailor-made, preferably specific and practical answers. If some expert would just tell us how to do it, give us the technique, our problem would be solved. In view of all this, our caution here is simply to remember that teaching at its best is a combination of science and art for which no "manual" can supply all the answers in advance. The intention of this book is to describe and illustrate "know how" in order to aid you in making creative judgments about your own teaching and in improving your own skills.

Toward this end, we will discuss practical aspects of student teaching and problems one encounters as a beginner in the classroom. We will take a look at adolescence as a time of life, and consider adolescent growth and development as it relates to the high school. We will analyze the curriculum of the high school as you are apt to find it, considering ways and means of making democracy come alive in the high school classroom. We will concentrate also on activities and materials for learning, giving attention to planning instruction, utilizing instructional aids, role-playing, group techniques, drill and review. We will consider special problems in learning, such as those of slow and fast learners, and those involving discipline. We will examine tests and other practical means for evaluating learning, and we will discuss useful techniques of individual counseling and group guidance.

Out of the hard facts and the experiences reported here will come a grasp of "modern methods" in secondary education, which will help you become your own effective self in high school teaching. By striking a balance among subject matter, values, and skill in methods, you will make your way as a teacher who "really counts."

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Student Teaching

IN YOUR LIFE there are a few outstanding episodes. These are the days that mark your whole future. We can predict with reasonable assurance that your student-teaching experience will be one of those landmarks in your life. You will forget courses, professors, fellow students, but you will not forget your student teaching.

Once upon a time there was a theory that teachers were born, not made. But you have only to reflect a moment to realize that any competence, teaching included, depends both on what you were born with and on what experience has enabled you to make of that birth endowment. Some of you have more native endowment usable in teaching than others. Some of you have more experience usable in teaching than others.

Society has too much at stake, and you have too much at stake, to allow chance to select you for teaching. Society must know, and you must know, as objectively as possible, how effectively you can actually put to work both native and acquired assets. Part of that judgment has already been made, or you would not be entering student teaching. No one has devised a better or a fairer final assessment than student teaching to tell society—and you—whether you really ought to teach.

At last you will try your hand at a very demanding profession.

You will be glad of what you have inherited, of what you have lived, of what you have learned. Still, the transition from the page in the textbook that describes a lesson plan to the actual moment when you hear yourself say, "Now class, let's open our books to . . ." will not be easy. You will try out many modes of behavior; discard this approach and attempt another; search for the nuance of tone and manner that evokes respect; choose painfully among all skills and knowledge in your field of teaching; and work your way through a thousand other tasks.

Student teaching is a trial period—a serious trial. It is a time when you must gain your educational sea legs. Yet it is also an extremely rewarding time. It is a time to make mistakes without the overwhelming feeling that any one mistake is fatal. It is a time when everyone (even, believe it or not, your students) wants you to succeed. It is important, therefore, to think carefully about your student-teaching experience. It is unique in the career training provided for the teacher. Make the most of it.

Although it is difficult to provide a picture of the "typical" student-teaching situation, some elements in this situation are constant everywhere. It is to these constant elements that we will direct our attention. Specifically, student teachers—

Are gradually inducted into teaching.

Are observed and evaluated by the resident teacher and the college supervisor.

Seek the resources in the school and the community which are available to the teacher.

Begin to learn about and to know the adolescents in their classes.

Evaluate their own strengths and weaknesses.

Let us look briefly at each of these elements.

Induction into the Responsibility of Teaching

The principle of sink-or-swim ordinarily does not apply to student teaching. The early days of student teaching usually include

a gradual taking over of portions of the teaching job, until finally full responsibility is assumed.

I must admit I approached my first day as a student teacher with fear and trembling. What if I were asked to conduct a lesson on irregular verbs? True, I had studied French since I was a sophomore in high school, but I felt far from ready to explain its complexities to a first-year class in French. I found it a bit hard to eat breakfast that day; in fact, I did not eat any breakfast! I was to regret this later, when lunch time seemed several weeks away and my stomach was growling, but at the moment breakfast did not seem like a good idea.

Well, to make a long story short, I turned up at school at the proper time. The first thing I did was completely lose my way to the room I had been assigned to. I had been there only once before, briefly. After finding out where the room was, I suddenly remembered my instructions from Dr. Redding: "Report to the office when first arriving at the school building." Rapidly I retraced my steps, thankful that I had come early.

In the office there were quite a few teachers. I could tell that most of them were teachers, but a few very young-looking persons seemed hardly older than the high school students. I later learned that they, too, were teachers. I guess I will look that young in some faculty group some day.

I looked at the group uncertainly. Someone turned to me and said, "Are you one of the new student teachers?" "Yes," I answered, "And I am not quite sure where I go. This is my first day." "Who is your teacher?" she asked me. "Mrs. Bartlett, the French teacher," I told her. "Well, I guess she hasn't arrived yet, or at least I don't see her. But come over here and I will introduce you to our principal." And with that I had my first official introduction to the school.

So read the first paragraphs of one student-teacher's diary of his experiences.

We would hope, of course, that you could eat breakfast the first day of this new adventure, but it is entirely understandable if you are nervous and a little apprehensive. It is more than likely, as in the episode you have just read about, that you will find a warm, friendly, interested welcome. As a student teacher, you will be joining a group of teachers who have been working together for some time. They will be glad to have you as a new member of the faculty, and most of them will feel some professional responsibility toward you.

The assignment to a classroom for student teaching, therefore,

means more than just reporting to a particular teacher at a particular time. It means becoming part of a school and a school system. It means becoming a colleague in a profession.

Watch Your Appearance

Even though mentioning appearance is to dwell on the obvious, you must not underestimate the importance of the way you look. The collegiate look must give way to the professional look. You don't have to be told that white bobby socks, though they may be appropriate on the campus, are not to be seen among teachers. You may not be so conscious of more subtle differences in dress. The dress of the student teacher must reflect his new status as a professional person. Many student teachers and beginning teachers are understandably self-conscious about their youth, since they are often only three or four years removed from the age group of the students they are now beginning to instruct. Dress should be chosen to accent maturity and competence. You need to recall that students, lacking anything else to attract their attention, will be looking at you. Your dress will reflect your feeling about yourself. An untidy appearance suggests an untidy personality, carelessness, even incompetence.

Your appearance, then, not only suggests how you feel about yourself but also how you want others to feel about you. If, as a young woman, you want your students to feel that you have maturity and dignity, you won't wear extreme styles. As a young man desiring respect, you won't indulge in exotic shirts and exaggerated haircuts. Of course, this doesn't mean that you need to look unattractive. You can dress smartly while you underline your maturity.

Check the Building

You will find it useful to get acquainted quickly with the building where you do your student teaching. Is there a floor plan of the building available? It is irritatingly easy to get lost in some of the larger secondary schools, to go up the "down" stairs or enter the cafeteria through the "exit" door.

The floor plan can tell you more than you may have realized

about a school. Examine it carefully. Notice whether or not the school has provisions for such special rooms as a library, an audio-visual center, counselors' rooms, a first-aid room, an auditorium, a gymnasium, and shops. This careful examination of the floor plan tells you something about a school's program. Are there many shop rooms? What kind? What home-economics facilities are there? How extensive does the library seem to be? Do several counselors seem to share the same cubbyhole? Or is there no separate space for counseling at all? Are there elaborate gym facilities, but no special rooms indicated for music or art? The allocation of space in a building tells what the planners considered important.

Take some leisurely walks around the school. If you can go when the building is empty, you can investigate more freely what facilities the various rooms have, and how they are used. Is this a school where room after room has books in abundance on open shelves, where colorful pictures, posters, and displays of student work make the atmosphere alive? Or are the rooms bare, with only occasional evidences of vitality and imagination in teaching and learning? Are chairs and desks arranged like a factory production line geared to a standard product, or do variations in room arrangements indicate differences in teaching purposes and teaching processes? Probably your school represents neither of the extremes. But you will soon gain a sense of the quality that, by and large, pervades teaching there.

During the school day, when the hum of activity from many classrooms reminds you of a very active, full beehive, another walk will add to your impressions. In some schools all room doors are closed, without even a pane of glass so that you can see what is going on. You may have to secure permission to visit classes. In other schools, many doors are open, as though to welcome anyone passing by to look in and even to participate. Whatever policy prevails, take time to see as much as you can of what is going on in the rooms. Is there an atmosphere of freedom, ease of movement, class-wide discussion? Or are rooms quiet, silent, with everyone doing the same things at the same time and no one out of his seat? Perhaps you will observe many different kinds of rooms in one building. Some silent, some noisy, some orderly, some chaotic. Watching the school in this

way gives you some sense of its total impact, not just its effectiveness in one or two fields of instruction. How would it feel to be a student here?

Observe Your Class

What is the next possible step in the induction process? While you are acquainting yourself with the general structure of the building, seeing the rooms and something of what is happening in the school as a whole, you are getting acquainted with the class and the teacher with whom you will be intimately associated in student teaching.

At first your role is merely that of an observer. You don't have to wait with "fear and trembling" that at any moment your resident teacher will pounce upon you and say, "Here, Miss Jones, you take over this next lesson while I run to the office." This could happen, of course, but it is unlikely.

The resident teacher, too, has a stake in seeing that you are gradually eased into full teaching responsibility. If you give confused instruction, or if the room dissolves into chaos, then the teacher has created added burdens for himself. So it is mutually advantageous that, as a student teacher, you spend some time in learning about the classroom, the course, the students, before taking on independent responsibility.

Observing a roomful of adolescents is no easy task. Perhaps prior to student teaching you have done some observing. If your previous observations have been part of a "typical" teacher education program, you watched a classroom to learn about students. Now, you will not only watch the classroom to learn about students, but you will also look to see what this teacher does with *this* class, which you will soon teach. You will want to learn how the unit of work is developed, how order is maintained, how roll is taken—and how all the other innumerable details of *teaching* are carried out.

During this observation period, you will try to see yourself as the "teacher." Sitting in an inconspicuous place in the room, you will try to get very clear in your own mind some important and practical details about teaching in *this* class:

The general approach taken by the teacher. Each teacher has his own "style" of teaching. Since the student teacher will be continuing where the regular teacher left off, it is important to know what kinds of learning expectations have been built up in the students. Do they expect to be quizzed on details? Or are they encouraged to think about broad generalizations? Are certain skills emphasized—spelling, reading, orderliness—or are they ignored in favor of other kinds of learnings?

Classroom routines. The details of classroom management are considered in a later chapter of this book. However, early in student teaching you will want to be crystal-clear about basic procedures that simplify classroom routine. For example: How is roll taken? Is an absence list sent to the office? How is it sent? What records of attendance must be kept? How are previous absences, if excused, noted by the teacher? What happens with unexcused absences? How are supplies distributed? Who checks supplies? How much time must be allowed for these routines?

Classroom rules. Some teachers have strict rules about certain behavior. Gum-chewing, for example, may be forbidden in one classroom. Other teachers may refuse to permit students to sharpen pencils once class has begun, or they may not permit students to go to hall lockers for forgotten work or materials. You will want to know precisely which rules have been made important by this teacher in this class.

Instructional materials. Of course you will ask for a copy of any texts that are used and any available accompanying course of study. You will want to know what other instructional materials are available and how they are organized and distributed.

These details may seem obvious. But it is one thing to observe obvious details and quite another to take care of them yourself easily and efficiently. Uncared for, the small details effectively disrupt the finest teaching. For this reason, resident teachers often ask the student teacher to undertake some of the routine tasks very early in student teaching. Taking roll, for example, is an invaluable "first task." Not only does this acquaint the student teacher with the procedures of taking attendance; it also helps him attach names to faces in the classroom.

A second task the student teacher may undertake early is the distribution and handling of supplies, equipment, and other instructional materials. It may look simple to get ten library books to ten different students or to distribute test papers or collect assignments. But unless you know just what to do and what to say, you will create confusion with miraculous speed.

Talk to the Teacher

You come nearer to the heart of teaching as you observe the general approach to subject matter taken by the resident teacher. From texts or other teaching materials, from the nature of the syllabus, when one is available, from the type of past examinations, from the nature of current assignments, you will get a partial picture of what is being taught, how the teaching is organized, and how the effectiveness of the teaching is appraised. But the resident teacher himself remains the best resource.

During the first several days of observation you will have many questions about the approach to teaching in this class. Ask the resident teacher. Ask diplomatically. Ask at a judicious moment—but ASK! Why was this aspect of the material emphasized while that was ignored? Why did the teacher spend so much time on one diagram but skip lightly over another? Why did he tell Jim his answer was good—when you thought it left much to be desired? Why did he cross-examine Jack, whose answer seemed to you to be quite adequate?

These and similar questions will certainly arise. Only the resident teacher can furnish the answers. From experience, he has learned that some students can grasp certain concepts at this point in their learning, while other concepts are either too difficult or not important until later. So he tailors the question and the suitability of the response to the student. He realizes that what may appear as a vague approximation of an answer to you represents a commendable effort for a slow student like Jim. At the same time, he may demand a much more exacting analysis from Jack, whose ability is distinctly superior.

Learning, you have heard often enough in your courses, is human—flexible, changing. But in student teaching the abstract

principle takes on a face and a name. You are no longer content to recite the theorem. You must now act. You must pick and choose among all the possibilities within a field of teaching and at the same time stay in key with the teaching that preceded your entry. You must keep asking, What does *this* teacher select for *this* class? And, in the next breath, What must *I* choose which I *can* teach, considering what has been taught?

As you observe during the first days of student teaching, you will want to make many notes. Perhaps you will be given an observation guide to direct your note-taking. Often, student teachers consider this record-keeping an unprofitable exercise, or worse. Actually, such exercises in observation are busy-work *only* when you do not use the data to develop insight. The writing down itself is an important discipline. Instead of having vague "feelings" about teaching, you must make concrete statements about what is seen and heard. You must record actual behavior rather than shadowy impressions unsupported by evidence from the classroom. Then, inevitably, you will become more and more realistic in your appraisal of teaching.

Early in your student teaching, make an appointment with your resident teacher to discuss your observation notes. It is wise not to leave such interviews to chance. A *regular* scheduled appointment with the resident teacher—before school, at lunch, during the free period, after school—should be arranged. To develop your insight about teaching, plan carefully what you wish to discuss. Use the time wisely. Inquire about your most important concerns. These interviews are never long enough. Often you will find that your view from the back of the room is different from that of the teacher. You may discover what lies behind seemingly casual or puzzling actions. Usually, you will learn that the resident teacher has a good reason for doing what he did when he did.

Try Your Wings

What are the next steps in your induction into teaching? These observations are preliminaries, building background. Soon you will become impatient. You will want to try your teaching wings. You will begin to feel more and more ready to teach. At the same time, your resident teacher will be judging your readiness. Some resident

teachers are more cautious than others. Some willingly let go the class; others hold back for a longer time. Sometimes the resident teacher feels that the student teacher is not yet oriented to the classroom, and this is always difficult to accept. But, one day, your chance will come. Probably you will begin with only a part of the full teaching responsibility: "Tomorrow, why don't you prepare to give the assignment just before the study period we have planned?" Or, "You can read out the quiz questions in third period, and check the answers with the class."

Next, you may take over several such activities and learn to manage the transition from one to another. Before you know it, you will be teaching whole periods. And finally, you may have the opportunity to plan a complete unit of work. It is best to do this planning some weeks before the class will have reached that point in the course. This gives you time to check the plans with the resident teacher and the supervisor from your college or university. You will also have time to start rounding up some of the materials that might be used by the class. What references are there in the library on this topic? Are any motion pictures available? Can they be scheduled? How? Are there resource visitors that could be used?

Your resident teacher may caution you to go slowly in your first teaching plans. "Stay with what you know, and use methods in which you feel full security," is good standard advice. It might be valuable to have a motion picture, but are you sure you can run the projector without a mishap? What if the resource visitor turns out to be a poor speaker, or does not turn up at all? You and your resident teacher may decide to forego the more dramatic activities at first for those in which you both feel confidence. The simple and the unpretentious will build your skill surely and steadily.

The resident teacher will probably remain in the room during the first stages of your teaching. But the day will arrive when he leaves the room—and there you are, all alone with the class, which now consists of thirty individual, recognized, unpredictable adolescents. Gradually you will grow more assured. By the time several weeks have passed, you will have full responsibility in at least one of the classes to which you are assigned. By the end of the period, you may well be teaching full time in any additional class or classes your student-teaching assignment includes.

Evaluation by Resident Teacher and College Supervisor

The second important element in the student-teaching experience involves the relationships among the student teacher, the resident teacher, and the college supervisor. The most successful student-teaching experience develops when these three persons work together for common ends.

In many institutions the relationship between college and high school is a very close one. The student-teaching experience is a product of joint planning and effort. Some colleges have regular meetings with resident teachers to work out the steps in the induction of student teachers. In other institutions the contact between college and classroom is more informal and casual. Whatever the arrangement, the student teacher soon realizes that his position under dual supervision is unique in his experience.

The Resident Teacher

Suppose you look at the relationship for a moment from the point of view of the resident teacher. One of the most trying emotional burdens of teaching is the feeling that no matter how well you do, you can always do better. Some students have been reached only slightly by your best teaching efforts. Others do not seem to respond at all—ever. Some puzzle and worry you. At heart, you must have a humble view of your success. Your satisfactions are always tempered by the knowledge that your teaching is never completely finished, never accomplished to perfection.

Resident teachers are selected because they are fine teachers. They have achieved a degree of skill and poise well worth emulating. But even the most assured, most experienced teacher has moments of concern and self-doubt. So while he welcomes the student teacher, he often, at the same time, feels defensive under the fresh, and often critical, eye now scrutinizing his teaching. He knows that the neophyte typically brings high ideals to teaching. From his own experience, the resident teacher may believe that many of these high hopes are achieved, if ever, only after long years of working toward them. Yet the resident teacher knows it is pointless to say that to

the student teacher. Instead, he must silently bear what may appear to him judgment by unreasonable standards. In this sense, then, the student teacher may pose a threat to some resident teachers. But there is another, more threatening, possibility. Sometimes a resident teacher honestly feels that he is not really abreast of the latest educational practices, or in touch with the newest scholarship in his own fields. He may suspect that the student teacher, in some areas, actually knows more than he does. How would you predict that a resident teacher would react under such circumstances?

Student teachers sometimes feel that their resident teachers are reluctant to have them try newer classroom techniques. This hesitancy may be motivated entirely by a sincere belief that it is better for student teachers to gain confidence through tried and tested approaches before venturing into the new and unpredictable. But it is also possible that some resident teachers are motivated by defensiveness and uncertainty. The resident teacher may regard proposed innovations as a reminder that he has succumbed to a routine approach. The rejection of the beginner's enthusiasm may enhance his sense of status and security.

On the other hand, many student teachers will find their resident teachers eager to see a new approach to content or method. Indeed, some teachers testify that the supervision of student teachers is a very refreshing experience and contributes in important measure to their own stimulation and renewed zest for teaching.

The student teacher very often does go to his assigned classrooms with definite ideas about how *he* will teach "The Westward Movement," or "The Nature of the Atom," or "How to Compose a Business Letter." No one can say for sure, however, that every student teacher will get a chance to try out all his ideas. Some will; some won't. Whether or not plans materialize will depend not only on the competence of the student teacher but also on the feelings and attitudes of his resident teacher.

The complications of the relationship go further, of course. The student teacher will spend many hours observing his resident teacher. He will be favorably impressed by some incidents in the classroom and disturbed by others. Since he is, after all, a novice, he may find it difficult to understand why a teacher ignores certain kinds of behavior.

When Bill fell asleep in class for the third time, the student teacher, Frank Lindsey, began to get nervous. Surely the resident teacher, Mrs. Northway, would notice this time! It was touch and go whether Bill would even stay in his seat as his six-foot frame relaxed in all directions. But nothing happened. Just before the bell rang, Bill did wake up. He picked up his books as though nothing were amiss, got the assignment from the girl across the aisle, and sauntered out. Frank couldn't restrain himself. He waited until Bill had gone, then asked Mrs. Northway about the incident.

"Oh, yes," said Mrs. Northway, "I saw Bill asleep. I guess this is the third time this week, isn't it? Well, when you have taught as long as I have, you learn what to notice and what not to notice. Bill grew awfully fast during the last ten months—something like eight inches in all—and he's just exhausted trying to keep up with himself! I'm pretty sure that in a little while, when he gets enough food in him and learns how to maneuver all that new length, he will wake up!"

"What about discipline?" Frank asked. "Won't the other kids think he's just getting away with something?"

The problem posed by Frank Lindsey, the student teacher in this anecdote, is pertinent to much of student teaching. The experienced teacher can justifiably ignore what may seem superficially to be a gross breach of classroom etiquette. Can a student teacher do the same thing? What should a student teacher do if he finds himself at variance with his resident teacher?

These inevitable questions are difficult to answer categorically. No two people will be in entire agreement on what the right procedure is in any given teaching situation. What is right and appropriate for one person may be difficult or impossible or out-of-character for another. Besides, what a person with experience can do may not always be the best guide for the beginner.

The College Supervisor

Clearly, the relationships between student teacher and resident teacher are complicated enough. But usually there is a third figure to consider. He is the college supervisor. Some student teaching is entirely supervised by the resident classroom teacher. More often, a member of the college staff also visits the student teacher at regular intervals. Many times the college supervisor has taught or is currently

teaching the student in courses on curriculum and on methods of instruction in the subject the student is now trying to teach. Whether the college supervisor has taught the student teacher or not, he does represent the college in its effort to keep the program in teacher education in touch with the problems of the beginner. Fellow staff members at the college rely heavily on him for data on strengths and weaknesses in the preparation for student teaching. The supervisor will advise the instructor in educational psychology whether that long discussion on individual differences helped or hindered or made no impression at all on student teachers. He respects the candor of student teachers who confide without fear of reprisal their satisfactions and anxieties about their preparation for teaching.

At the same time the college supervisor is a resource person for the student teacher. He knows curriculum trends in a given subject, he knows adolescents, he knows teaching methods, he knows instructional materials, and he knows evaluation procedures. Of course, not all the college supervisor knows will be useful in a given classroom. The usefulness of his knowledge will depend on the kind of teaching and learning encouraged by the resident teacher. It will also vary with the ability of the student teacher to adapt this knowledge to his own emerging style of teaching.

Certainly, the frequency of the college supervisor's visits affect his ability to be helpful. He can make more specific recommendations when he knows the day-by-day progress of the student teacher's class. When he cannot visit as often as he would wish, he may supplement his information by reports from the student teacher or by regular conferences with him. The student teacher, then, helps himself when he makes every effort to keep his college supervisor well informed.

It is only realistic to recognize that the college supervisor comes to appraise the student teacher as well as to help him. From the beginning, the student teacher must be clear about what that appraisal includes. He must prepare himself for the visits in terms of the evaluation he knows will be made. He must see that his resident teacher is equally aware of the way in which he will be judged. Immediately after the visit, the student teacher should make it his responsibility to arrange a conference to discuss his performance in detail.

You see now more clearly, perhaps, that the student teacher is often the servant of two masters: the resident teacher and the college supervisor. The best insurance of support from both is clear and systematic exchange of information between the two. Most of this communication can be assumed to be the responsibility of the two supervisors. But a wise student teacher will plan diplomatic checks to see that the communication continues to be regular and ungarbled.

At its best, the system of providing support from a college supervisor as well as a resident teacher gives the student more direct assistance than he is likely ever to have again as a high school teacher. Admittedly, the relationship is complex; but it need not be obstructive. On the contrary, if the student teacher does his part to make the relationship cordial and constructive, he will be immensely grateful for the guidance it provides.

School and Community Resources Available to the Teacher

As one part of the induction process, the student teacher will become acquainted with the building in which he is teaching. The modern school houses many kinds of services. Learning how these services function, how they are used by teacher or students, is an important part of student teaching.

In the later chapters of this volume there will be detailed discussions of the services to be found in the typical secondary school. However, the student teacher, because he is a student teacher and because of his relatively brief stay in the school, may or may not be able to use all services. He must learn quickly which services it is feasible to use and what procedures make the services available. He must settle, then, such practical questions as how supplies are ordered (if he can order supplies); how students use the library (if library use is practical for *this* class and *his* teaching); how audio-visual materials are obtained (if such materials can be obtained during his short stay) and scheduled; what information is in the counselor's files about a specific student (if student teachers are given access to these files).

Sometimes a picture gives us a vivid impression of the complex and vital personality behind it. We feel the impact of this girl's eager acceptance of the future, of her pleasure in the engrossing problems of the present, and of her enthusiastic use of the experiences of the past. We sense these things, but we do not know the details that would give us a clear and individualized knowledge of what she is, has been, and will be. The hints we receive can be broadened and deepened only if we learn to know this girl as she passes from childhood into womanhood. All we can do as teachers will depend on knowing and understanding her.

To do our job well we need as much insight and information as we can secure about a student's beginnings, environment, qualities, and capacities. We must see each one of our students as a person—a person with a complex past, a crucial present, a unique future. Some of them will attract us at once; others will not create so immediate an impression. But knowing them as thoroughly as our industry and sensitivity enable us to do is a central part of the challenge of being a teacher. *[Photo courtesy U. S. Office of Education]*





American high schools help boys and girls in all the tasks they face as they grow into men and women. These tasks are manifold and so must the help be—it must include education in home and family living, in boy-girl relationships, and in some of the other satisfactions of the good life.

The high school cannot and should not supplant the home in these areas of learning. Instead, the school strengthens and supports the role of the parents as they teach their sons and daughters how to live decently and graciously.

Here we see two examples of high school students in responsive social contact. In one the school provides a setting where "dining" is distinguished from "eating." In the other, two teen-agers handle a telephone call in which both are concerned. One situation is formal, the other informal. In each, opportunities for both direct and indirect learning can be found. How should high schools provide these opportunities? [Photos courtesy **Standard Oil Co., N. J.** (top) and **Atlanta Public Schools** (bottom)]

It may be useful to develop a check list of such practical questions to use during the first few weeks of student teaching. A standard list might be suggested, but each school and each subject has problems peculiar to itself. For example, some schools have audio-visual coordinators who will order materials for you. Others make this an individual responsibility. Repair of sewing machines is of no concern to a social-studies teacher; nor are problems of transporting a band of any importance to the typing teacher. The student teacher's own list, developed with the help of his resident teacher and college supervisor, will probably serve him better.

What about the community? In Chapter 8 of this book there is a detailed discussion of the use of community resources, which will not be repeated here. However, a student teacher often makes little use of community resources. Their use may involve long-range planning and a knowledge of the community impossible for the student teacher to obtain soon enough. The student teacher should, however, gauge how much he might do—given the time and the opportunity. It is useful to know, for example, that the local museum has some Indian artifacts that might be the source of a stimulating project for the bored genius in third period, if the student teacher were his permanent teacher. Likewise, the budding scientist might have been assigned the task of interviewing the consulting chemist at the sewage-disposal plant as part of a classroom task, if time had permitted. Knowing community resources, and making some use of them, if only in a very small way, helps build security for later use in full-time teaching.

Nor should the influence in the classroom of the general character of the community be overlooked. Student teachers may be so overwhelmed by the new tasks and problems within the classroom that they forget the significance of the outside world in their students' lives. Do they come from a stable and clearly defined community, or are they gathered together from mushrooming suburbs, where no sense of "community" has yet developed? If it is a city school, do many students come from apartment-house or rooming-house areas? Or, if it is a rural school, do they come from a prospering or a marginal farming area? The community setting makes a marked difference in the classroom approaches that can be profitably attempted. It is particularly important for the student teacher to

examine the environment of the students he is now teaching and compare it with his own. Are they similar? Or is the students' community a quite different world? Every student teacher must see adolescents as they are, not as a projection of his own experiences and prejudices.

Learning About and Getting to Know the Adolescents in the Classroom

For many prospective teachers, the student-teaching situation is the first real opportunity to be an adult leader with a group of adolescents. The questions of first priority are: Can I get along with them? Will they like me? The adolescents will be equally curious about you and will be making their estimate of you as you are of them. Contrary to popular report, they will usually *not* aim to make life miserable for you. Most student teachers find that the adolescents are more than ready to help, to give support, and to make the initial teaching experience successful.

Occasionally you may find a class that makes the student teacher a handy target for aggressions built up in other parts of their school day. If the students do seem intent on frustrating your every teaching effort, you may be confident that your resident teacher will take whatever action is necessary. It is only honest to say that some student teachers do have difficulty in establishing rapport with adolescents, however much they are assisted. Others never do build any secure competence in any part of teaching. This, of course, is one of the reasons for student teaching. It provides one good test of whether teaching is a wise vocational choice.

If these last sentences have left you somewhat disturbed and apprehensive, you should be reminded of the previous reassurance that adolescents are willing to come more than halfway in helping you as a student teacher. Incidentally, you will find that the same is true of your first year on the job. If you have any knack for establishing initial rapport with students, they will be very patient as you learn, through your mistakes, how to increase your skill as a teacher. They are more likely to be with you than against you.

Now, for the big question: How do you establish rapport with adolescents? Already mentioned is the students' characteristic curiosity about you as a student teacher. They may ply you with questions—some personal, some embarrassing. These questions should be answered judiciously. They do want to know about the college or university you attend. They want to know why you chose teaching. They want to know something about you as a person—married? children? They want to know where your home is and whether you like jazz, and a thousand other things. Such curiosity is usually friendly and natural rather than malicious. Adolescents, like the children they have so recently been, find security in the knowledge of familiar things about strangers invading their environment. Since the student teacher is often closer to them in age than the resident teacher, they may also feel freer to ask questions reflecting their own immediate concerns about the future.

Some reserve must be maintained in answering students' questions. You do not, either as a student teacher or as a regular teacher, speak with the same freedom you would use with adult friends. Your personal life should be kept personal and private. But not so private that the outlines of a human being are obscured by a textbook and a flinty manner. If you keep firmly in mind that your students' interest in you is not intended to be presumptuous, you will answer in the proper spirit.

Rapport of course includes far more than skill in answering questions. It is a manner, a way of looking at people and speaking to them, a tone of voice, an attitude of genuine interest in others. These adolescents seek, from you as they do from any teacher, an indication of sincere regard for them as individuals. Being ready to smile, saying hello in the hall, learning their names quickly, remembering what gave them trouble or what they did well in class, will aid you immeasurably in establishing rapport with them.

You can see that the most significant element in gaining acceptance is the degree to which you see each adolescent as an individual—with a name, a physique, a past, a future; with hopes and fears; with assets and liabilities. Many a beginning teacher is helped through the trial years by first of all seeing his students as three-dimensional individuals, each important in his own right. Students will forgive you much if this attitude is implicit in your behavior.

Student teachers sometimes find it difficult to establish rapport with adolescents because they are honestly frightened of them. You can't approach those who frighten you with an easy and relaxed smile! The best cure for this fear is closer association with the students. Casual conversations in the corridor, on the school grounds, at sports events will help. Helping with the extracurricular activities is also useful for this purpose. None of this is to recommend that you try to be one of them. You can enjoy them as any friendly adult would.

One further caution about your efforts to achieve rapport. This may be the first time you have been taken behind the scenes in the lives of other people without their being aware of your knowledge. You will consult with other teachers and counselors about individual students. But you will make your inquiries in the spirit of gaining insight and understanding in order to work better with an adolescent, not to indulge a morbid interest in the lurid details of the lives of others. From these conferences and from the cumulative record cards maintained as guidance files, you may learn that Jane's mother is institutionalized, that Bob's father is an alcoholic, that Jim's family is in serious financial difficulties. You may be tempted to gossip about such information and the students involved. But you will want to heed the admonition of professional ethics never to gossip about your students. You must observe extreme circumspection about the places where you talk about any part of your teaching. Conversation carried on in the supposed privacy of the corner drugstore may be overheard by some students whose presence escaped your attention. Remember, you may recognize at sight about one hundred students, but there may be three or four hundred who know who you are.

Self-evaluation of Strengths and Weaknesses

Student teaching is valuable not only for the new skills and insights gained, but for the opportunity to find an answer to the all-important question, Should I become a teacher?

It was the last day of class. Marie felt a little sad because she had grown genuinely fond of the two classes to which she had been

assigned. They had not always been easy, but the kids were fun. One student had bothered her, however. He was the brightest in the class. He had rather scared her because his answers were always so accurate and so glib. She felt that secretly he scorned her, and knew how indecisive and mediocre she really was. Lars was that kind of boy. Just as she was leaving the building for the last time, she heard her name called. Lars was behind her. "This is your last day, Miss Bennett?" he asked. "Yes," Marie answered, "And I am kind of sorry. I have enjoyed it." Lars fixed his pale blue eyes on her, and with that rather cold and shiny manner of his he said, with utmost seriousness, "You know, I think you will make a very superior teacher. I learned something from you." And with that startling comment, he turned and walked briskly off down the hall.

Probably not many student teachers will have such a dramatic incident to clarify their feelings about teaching. But through this trial period, every student teacher should be engaged in taking a sharp look at this new role to see if it really fits, if it feels good inside now, if it has potentialities for enduring satisfactions.

Of course, sometimes you may expect too much from student teaching. Although successful student teaching is the best predictor of future success in teaching, some students who perform at a barely acceptable level have been known to mature into very fine teachers. They are the "slow starters." On the whole, however, a student who cannot perform at all satisfactorily in student teaching rarely develops the requisite skills.

Even those who enjoy a fair amount of success in student teaching should scrutinize the profession carefully. Despite this early achievement, some may find teaching not a fully satisfying vocation. Careful assessment now may prevent disappointment later.

In all these assessments, student teaching should be regarded as a protected environment. Usually there is someone around to remedy the mistakes. It is a time to find out what areas of teaching pose particular personal problems. Some future teachers, for example, are very good at presenting new subject matter in an ingenious, even creative fashion, but are easily confused by testing procedures. Some student teachers find it a major problem to adjust their vocabulary and manner of speaking so that students can understand them. Others find it difficult, in leading a discussion, to follow content and amount of participation simultaneously. Discipline is always a big bogey for

some student teachers, who may feel, even after student teaching, that effective classroom management still eludes them.

In conferences with the resident teacher and the college supervisor, you should ask for specific help, whatever your strengths and weaknesses. Most of us dislike criticism. But you need to keep reminding yourself that no one expects a student teacher to be without difficulties. This is your opportunity to obtain expert help. A resident teacher or college supervisor who does not make specific criticisms is not being very helpful! You will find that by expecting and welcoming suggestions, you add to your confidence and competence.

SUMMARY

You are on your way. Student teaching is your passport to a great profession. Not that you assume all the prerogatives and responsibilities at once. You are gradually inducted—learn the basic routines—take on more responsibility day by day. You begin to think of yourself as a teacher—a good teacher. You learn to work earnestly with the resident teacher and your college supervisor. You explore the many resources your school and community offer. You discover adolescents and wonder whether you were ever like that. You sit back and try to add it all up. You find that you do some things surprisingly well and others with discouraging clumsiness. But, like most of your fellow student teachers, somehow, miraculously, you survive.

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The Adolescent in the High School

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW thought that we might all be spared considerable trouble if children were born at the age of sixteen. But after taking a good look at one institution, the high school, populated almost exclusively by adolescents, you may have some reservations about this statement. Of course, not all high school students are sixteen. But even among the sixteen-year-olds, or tenth graders, there is a marvelous variety—as there is among those at any other point within the adolescent years.

Some, adolescent according to their age, are certainly not adolescent by any other standard: they are children. Others are clearly adult. Seeking the norm within this range is indeed an elusive task for you as a high school teacher.

Who is the adolescent? Is he dreamer or realist, sober citizen or juvenile delinquent, mischievous idler or earnest student? Probably he is all of these—and more—even as the rest of us are.

As a secondary school teacher, you spend your working life among adolescents. One of your first tasks is to try to understand

something of the hopes, fears, tasks, and potentialities of this period of development. You will want to reflect upon your role as an adult responsible for the guidance and educational well-being of these complicated young people. Above all, furthermore, it is essential that you begin your teaching with a compassionate sympathy for the vacillations of adolescence, tempered by an objective understanding of the problems of youth in the troubled twentieth century. When you bring to teaching this kind of feeling and understanding, the whole educational process is imbued with an essential humanity.

The Person Is His History

The high school student does not enter your class with a clean slate. He has already had six, eight, or nine years of schooling. He has learned much about teachers, about school, about himself.

School means different things to different youngsters. For some children, elementary education has been a succession of weaknesses revealed and failures exposed. For others, school has been a haven from home or neighborhood pressure and problems. But for most it has been a good place to learn and grow under patient and devoted teachers. These past educational experiences of course affect the future. What can be accomplished by the high school in educating any individual student is significantly related to what has gone before.

Let us, then, look at the elementary school as an institution, and contrast it with the junior or senior high school. Of course, no two elementary or high schools are exactly alike. But, in general, the elementary school does differ in significant ways from the secondary school. For one thing, experimentation with the organization of the curriculum is more common in the elementary school. For example, the boundaries of separate subjects may be less strictly observed. The junior and senior high schools are more likely to abide by the accepted divisions of learning. The program of studies may be as separate and distinct as the periods of instruction, with little relationship maintained between English in first period, general science in second period, and world history in fifth period.

Whereas the student in elementary school spent most of the

school year with only one teacher and thirty to thirty-five other students, in junior and senior high school he may have from five to six different teachers in one day and be in classes with one hundred and fifty to two hundred students. Instead of having his belongings tucked into *his* desk in *his* room, he now shoves them helter-skelter into a hall locker. In contrast with the small, well-knit class he knew in Mrs. Johnson's fifth grade, in high school he identifies himself as a ninth grader or a junior belonging to a large, impersonal group, some of whose members he has never met. The small elementary school, drawing on relatively homogeneous neighborhoods, is replaced in his experience by the large high school, fed by many neighborhoods and, often, diverse social and cultural groups.

Let us think for a moment how it feels to be the student who is going through this transition. Is it an easy one? You know the answer. Even though the junior high school was designed to ease the change, it is still not an easy one. The institutions are too different. The youngster moving from the protected environment of the elementary school to the more open, more adult, more impersonal world of the junior or senior high school has good reason to be alarmed at the prospect. The rules are so different—and there are so many to learn. There are so many more students. How can he ever learn their names? (How, indeed?) There are so many more teachers. The student is likely to feel that whereas he was once an individual—known and called by name—he is now a cipher, a body filling a seat, occupying a line in a roll book. You think that this is an exaggeration? Perhaps it is; but it is uncomfortably close to what may be the reality for many.

Growing Up and Growing Older

Not only is the adolescent moving away from a simpler institution to a far more complex one, but his body is changing from the more simply managed and understood body of a child to the more complicated and mysterious body of an adult. Perhaps no more dramatic change occurs in the human organism than that which

occurs when the body changes from that of the immature child to that of the mature adult.

What happens as adolescence approaches? Suddenly, it seems, children become young men and young women. Actually, the growth process has been gradual and inevitable. But in terms of individual awareness, this change makes the difference between being a child and being a *person*. Do the needs and developmental tasks of an individual change fundamentally? Probably not. Needs and developmental tasks have been enumerated time and again. Each researcher and theoretician produces his own favorite list. Perhaps some needs and tasks do become sharper. Perhaps others do recede in importance. Perhaps the necessity for the meeting of some does become more urgent.

Let us look for a moment at some needs and developmental tasks that seem to be of major significance during adolescence.

Coming to terms with a changing physique. The bodily changes of adolescence are without parallel in the previous life history of the individual. We know what these changes are. What do they mean to the individual? Both girls and boys become suddenly, and acutely, aware of their bodies. Am I too fat—or too thin? Too tall or too short? Will I be “nice looking” so that others will like me? What does sex mean to me in my life? What am I supposed to do about sex?

Gaining independence from adults, particularly parents. In order to be an adult in his own right, the individual adolescent must be able to make decisions independently of those upon whom he has been dependent all his life—his parents. At the same time the adolescent needs his parents for advice, for support, for affection, and for spending money. The struggle for psychological independence when he is factually dependent makes conflict almost inevitable throughout this period.

Finding a place among age-mates. Ever since he could first toddle across the way into the sand pile in a neighboring yard, the child has found satisfaction in the company of others of his own age. During adolescence the group of his peers becomes even more important. To be part of a gang or clique provides him with necessary support in his search for adulthood.

Establishing heterosexual relationships. One result of the bodily changes of adolescence is an increased interest in heterosexual relationships. These relationships fulfill an important cultural function. The adolescent must find out what the appropriate courting rituals are, what is or is not permissible in his age group with the opposite sex. The emotional content of "love" begins to assume a new meaning and a new importance. His ideas about what makes an adequate mate begin to crystallize.

Selecting a vocation. "What are you going to be when you grow up?" is a question playful adults like to ask young children. But the question assumes seriousness for the adolescent. For a boy, the decision may affect the choice of high school courses, the alternative of learning a trade or preparing for college, the resolution to enter the armed services at an early date or to postpone the obligation until later. For a girl, the problem is at least as difficult. Her paramount aim may be to achieve marriage and a family, but she will probably want to be trained for some job—just in case.

All these needs and developmental tasks are familiar to you as a future teacher. But now is the time to stop and consider what this list, or any similar list, means in terms of actual classroom practices. Knowing what we know about adolescents, what difference can it make or should it make in what we teach and how we teach?

Coming to Terms with a Changing Physique

In the junior high school there is no sharper contrast than that between the tall, almost-mature girl and the boy whose adolescent growth spurt has not yet occurred. For both of these individuals, the factors of physical change are likely to be more important than any other single item on their personal agenda. The girl may worry and fret about being too tall, too mature for her age-mates. The boy may be consumed with anxiety because he may not grow tall enough, as tall as "real men" are supposed to be.

Somewhere in the curriculum such youngsters need to be given some of the basic and reassuring facts about the normal course of growth. The tall girl can learn that her growth has been accelerated but that soon her friends' growth will equal or exceed hers. Similarly,

the short boy can be encouraged to observe that many individuals get their growth spurt a year or more behind others in the same age group. Can such information be conveyed in biology or general science classes? In health and hygiene classes? Can this self-consciousness be considered as it appears in the poignant literature of adolescence?

At least one department cannot escape the facts of physical change. The music teacher is acutely aware of the transition during the junior high school or early high school years. At any moment a boy's voice may plunge from soprano to bass. Little wonder that he is often an uncooperative chorus member, when he cannot trust his changing vocal cords to come forth with the sound that he has long taken for granted. Of course, the teachers of other departments must be equally aware of the impact of this physical change. Perhaps it accounts for Johnny's reluctance to answer a direct question. Perhaps it is why Tony maintains long, stubborn silences. And, knowing this, a wise teacher does not hasten to charge the refusal to "native adolescent insolence." A little knowledge about growth can be of great help in these instances.

Let us remember, too, that many of the young girls in the early high school years are experiencing menstruation for the first time. This is a major and often traumatic experience for them. They do not know how they ought to feel; they are embarrassed, and yet secretly pleased at this indication of maturity. A new moodiness, a sudden self-consciousness, and unexplained absence, a reluctance to stand up in front of the class to report, may all indicate a peculiarly feminine problem.

One research inquiry¹ has confirmed a fact we all know but may not have related to classroom practice. Most adolescents, no matter what their appearance or size, wish they looked different, were taller or shorter, could be changed in some manner to approach more closely the ideal so hypnotically portrayed by television and motion pictures.

Some behavior observed by the classroom, then, is a symptom of adolescent reaction and adjustment to a changing physique. The

¹ Alexander Frasier and Lorenzo K. Lisonbee, "Adolescent Concerns with Physique," *School Review*, 58:397-405, October 1950.

content taught, the methods used, can take cognizance of the basic facts of physical change occurring early in adolescence. Forgetting, overlooking, or ignoring these facts of life can make classroom existence a burden to teachers and a hazard to young people.

Gaining Independence from Adults, Particularly Parents

In our culture, a strong relationship is presumed to exist between financial and psychological independence. The adolescent craves psychological independence—he wants to make more of his own decisions. Yet he knows that for a long time he will be financially dependent on his parents. Few adolescents can get jobs bringing any real financial independence. Even the small income that part-time work may yield is likely to evoke unwelcome parental advice about how that money should be spent or saved. At the same time, the things that money can buy are assuming increasing importance. To be able to have a jacket like the others; to have the right kind of slacks, or cashmere sweater, or thick-soled shoes, or haircut; to go to the skating rink, the bowling alley, or the Saturday-night dance—these are requisite to status in the group. But, more important, they are symbols of desired psychological independence: the freedom to make one's own choices. Indeed, one of the satisfactions of having the "right" clothes and the other "right" things derives from the fact that they are what youths, and *not* adults, wish. *Paradoxically, however, the adolescent can usually obtain these symbols of psychological independence only at the price of acknowledging financial dependence.* All the "right" things cost money, and the principal source of money is the parent from whom independence is so much desired.

At this point, one more complication enters. The adolescent wants independence, but he wants it when *he* wants it. He reserves the right to demand dependence again at a moment's notice. The young adolescent who is making the first tentative excursions into a real world of his own still wants to be sure that there is a haven at home where he is cared for, considered, protected, and even babied. He does not really desire full-time independence. The parent who unwarily tries to push the adolescent out into the impersonal adult

world may live to regret it. In earlier decades, when life was simpler, a young person of sixteen or eighteen could more easily find his place. Today's world is difficult enough for adults; it can be overwhelming for the immature. Despite the adolescent's earnest striving for independence, the home base remains important to him.

The high school teacher enters the scene at this troubled time, when parents and adolescents are trying to learn how to live with each other's shifting roles and needs. The pressures within the family inevitably affect what, when, and how the adolescent will learn during his school years. The emotions run wide and deep. It is simply not possible to shield school learning from the conflicts within the home. Feelings against parents may become feelings against teachers. Or, conversely, a teacher may become a refuge from a parent. Sometimes the phenomenon of the "crush," which may embarrass or even alarm a teacher, is primarily a symptom of dependency needs and a frightened seeking for security.

All this seems enough for an adolescent to endure, but there is more. It is not merely relationships with parents that become difficult; relationships with other members of the family may also constitute a source of disturbance. A younger brother, for example, can tease unmercifully when Mike first starts to shave or Sally begins to primp and posture and blush. The adolescent is vulnerable—and other family members with needs of their own may bruise the sensitive spots.

Behavior in the classroom may be a reflection of all these disturbances. Often, unfortunately, the clues escape the teacher's awareness. Adolescents are sometimes amazingly frank, and at other times completely inscrutable. Through a wise selection of subject matter, however, and especially through warm human relations, teachers can contribute much toward developing the adolescent's own insight and perspective.

Rebellion against the teacher's authority, we need to remind ourselves, is frequently rebellion against parental authority. Often we mistake classroom behavior as directed against the teacher as an individual. If instead we can see some of this behavior as part of the struggle for maturity, then we will be less likely to take it personally, and thus be in a better position to deal with the behavior itself,

giving guidance and support to the adolescent's uncertain reaching for independence.

Perhaps adolescents need more opportunities for leadership in the classroom; more chances to make choices that matter to them; more time to work on tasks of their own selection; less supervision from the teacher and more from their peers. These are some of the implications of the long search for independence that we can see at this point. There will be more.

Finding a Place among Age-mates

Every observer of adolescence stresses the group-mindedness of this age. Not a few parents and teachers deplore the gangs and cliques of the adolescent. If you are tempted to join the critics, take a minute to think about your own associations. You find a group for most of your social activities. The peer group of the adolescent develops from the play group of a younger age and is carried on almost unchanged into adulthood. But there is one startling difference between the adult group and the adolescent group. To the adolescent, the "gang" is the most important constellation in the universe; adults recognize that there are others in which they can find companionable stars.

Now look at the school. The junior and senior high schools throw the adolescent into association with a mixed mass of people of his own age. The one-hour period is the prevailing administrative pattern. How, in this brief time, can adolescents learn about one another? How can they find out who may make a good friend, and, just as important, how can they discover their own potentialities for friendship?

It is really surprising how well adolescents manage despite the institutional barriers placed in their way. The high school is their major social world; the place where, for the most part, they find their friendship circles. Sometimes, however, the "gang" becomes too closed and too powerful. When this happens, it may be a direct result of the lack of opportunity for exploring more fully the friendship possibilities in the school. If we were to arrange more time for youth to meet youth, to work together, to become acquainted, to

solve problems together, to just plain talk together, perhaps the friendship groups would be more open and less hostile. Since the need to be part of a group seems to be almost frighteningly intense for so many adolescents, we may need to look again at school arrangements that tend to have a separating and segmenting effect.

Of course, not all adolescents need the group quite so intensely. We tend to be acutely aware of this need, partly because most adolescents seem to have it, and partly because ours is a group-minded culture. But a significant minority in our high schools is relatively independent of the group. Perhaps some of these students are less mature than the majority, and an acute need to belong will manifest itself later, in college or on the job. Such young people should not be pushed into group life. Other adolescents may be satisfied by a rich, warm home environment. Still others may have a somewhat introverted personality and consequently do not—or cannot—need others very much. These can be helped to extend their friendship range, but they may never participate as actively in the demanding group life of the school as the majority of adolescents do.

We all know adolescents who are driven to excessive conformity. They are too easily dominated by the group's every whim. Is there a new mode in hair style? Then Joe hastens to follow it to the last thin line. Is there a new slang phrase? Then Joan repeats it *ad nauseam*. Some youngsters conform to the "tough" patterns of dress and speech and behavior. Others are slaves to the "sophisticated" veneer of expensive clothes and related social activities. These differences often, but not always, reflect different socioeconomic levels and family backgrounds.

For the teacher, the fact of greatest significance is that group cultures invade the classroom. The network of relationships within each group and among different groups extends into every period of the day. Consequently, the principle of pitting individuals or groups against one another is quite hazardous in practice. Instead, the wise teacher finds out as much as he can about the social structure of his class and school, and uses it constructively to facilitate learning. More opportunities for free movement among groups are needed in the classrooms of the secondary school so that loyalty to, dependence upon, and influence by any one group will be lessened. The best

hope of students' gaining wisdom about their associations surely lies in fuller freedom to participate in many kinds of groups.

Establishing Heterosexual Relationships

The typical adolescent gang or clique is not composed of both boys and girls, yet it is in these groups that the adolescent learns most about how to behave with members of the other sex. All the "folklore" of how to behave on a date, when to neck or not to neck, how to achieve popularity, is conveyed within the one-sex group. In our culture this is probably one of the most important functions of the adolescent group.

Today, dating behavior begins in junior high school. "Going steady" is a phenomenon observed in both junior and senior high school. The present generation seems to find it necessary to gain security early in the competitive world of heterosexual relations. The attitude appears to be that if you wait too long, you won't have much choice.

Teachers of course know all this. The social life of the school has changed with the dating habits of young people. Yet candid discussions of dating occur almost wholly *outside* the classroom. In a "senior problems" class, perhaps, one may hear allusions to the family situation facing modern Americans; or an antiseptic discussion of the physiology of sex may occur in a hygiene class. But, while the formal course and organizational pattern of the school largely ignores this major developmental task of adolescence, observant teachers can see manifestations of its importance all around them. The notes that are passed in class, the giggles, the clustering of boys and girls in hall and after school, the snatches of conversation that relay the latest gossip—all these demonstrate graphically how engrossing heterosexual relationships are. You may say that it is all very well to underline the importance of including an area now largely excluded from the school—but how shall it be done? Certainly no set program is ready to hand.

Teachers, particularly young teachers, have not always solved their own problems in the area of heterosexual relationships. Parents are not quite sure about just what youngsters ought to be doing—or what they ought to know. These and other difficulties have often

been cited to excuse the school from responsibility. But if enough teachers will sit down with parents to discuss a problem neither group can avoid, help and guidance can be given even within the taboos imposed by our culture.

Selecting a Vocation

As early as the end of the eighth grade young people must begin to make some important vocational decisions. At this time they must often decide whether to begin a college preparatory pattern of courses or a terminal program leading to employment after high school. Sometimes the decision can be delayed a little beyond this point, but not much. Often, unfortunately, neither youngsters nor parents realize the significance of this decision. Indeed, neither parents nor youngsters may be completely aware that any decision has been made. And, even if they do recognize the necessity of a choice, they may not be sufficiently well informed to make a wise decision.

We know that in many other countries children are screened at an even earlier age for either collegiate or terminal vocational education. Occasionally it is proposed that in the United States, too, choices should be made earlier, or that extent of education should be a matter not of choice but of aptitude. For the present, however, the American system does leave the way open for fairly free individual choice. So long as we continue that privilege, the responsibilities of the school for adequate counseling are clear.

Toward the close of high school the burden of the future presses even more heavily on the adolescent. Some find that the choices made earlier were not made wisely. Others press forward, eager to get on with the business of adult living. Confusion besets still others, who do not see any goal clearly. Today's high school does try to give more vocational guidance than ever before. Interest inventories appear frequently; counselors give individual and group advice on vocational goals. Active recruiting is sometimes permitted for some professions, such as teaching, nursing, and engineering, in which the need is acute. Still, vocational guidance is not all it should be. Some groups are particularly disadvantaged. Girls, for example, are pushed in two directions—to use manifest talents in a “career,” on the one hand, and, on the other, to forego a career for a “job” while they

wait for the right man to come along. Minority-group youngsters are likewise in a quandary. Even when they have undeniable talents or skills, they are often told by either teachers or other adults that there is no use in trying to buck the system: "You don't have a chance. You might as well be realistic."

Research studies tell us, also, that many very gifted individuals never utilize fully the talents they possess. One of the more serious criticisms of today's secondary school is that gifted individuals are often neglected or become submerged in the mass of the mediocre. It is therefore not only vocational *guidance* that seems needed, but vocational *stimulation*: opening up for students (and their parents) the reality of opportunities that do exist for those with special talents. To some extent, then, each teacher should be a talent scout. He should try to recognize and to encourage the particular talents in his students, revealing the many avenues that lead out from his field of instruction. It is here, perhaps, that we have been least imaginative educationally, and that we can do the most good for the future.

This very brief overview of the needs and developmental tasks of adolescence can only suggest what the teacher of adolescents must bear in mind as he faces his daily round of classes. One of the most important things he must keep in mind is that no two adolescents are exactly alike. They differ, as we have noted, in terms of their previous educational history. They differ in the intellectual ability they possess. Significant differences exist in the socioeconomic levels they come from. They differ in race and religion.

All these factors make a difference. They make a difference in the developmental pattern of each *individual* student. Education in America is a mass process. The schools are getting larger every year. More young people come to the secondary schools, and more of them stay through the four years. Yet each student is a unique and special entity. The most important single theme in this book is that good teaching can make it possible for each individual to grow according to his own special developmental pattern, to fulfill his own particular potentiality.

This is not an easy mandate to execute. Teachers have been struggling with this problem since the first teacher faced his first pupil. Today's world imposes some special handicaps on the teacher. The rapid rate of cultural change in our day is unparalleled in previ-

ous generations. It is difficult to realize how wide the gulf can be between the world of the adult and the world of the adolescent.

Social-Cultural Barriers between Teachers and Students

The older we grow, the less in touch we are with the significant pressures that surround the adolescent. We can recall our own trauma in these trying and exciting years. Yet the moral dilemmas of our own youth may seem mere childish problems to adolescents facing a more tempting, more dangerous, more confusing world. Margaret Mead has suggested that every teacher ought to be able to obtain a leave from teaching at regular intervals in order to live directly in the "other" life of the community—the community that surrounds the adolescent outside of school.²

Teachers typically do not read the comic books that are popular with adolescents; they do not always follow the same television programs; their movie-going habits are likely to be different. Often the barrier between adult and adolescent is accentuated because they live in different socioeconomic worlds. If the teacher represents the middle-class community, adolescents from lower economic groups may find the teacher's goals, motivations, and moral views far from meaningful. The whole system of rewards and punishments a teacher may use can be so outside the world of the adolescent as to have no power to motivate at all. Teachers value ambition, perseverance, the postponing of gratifications; many adolescents may not have so strong a sense of the promise of the future.

The Teacher and Group Differences

Very often we tend to judge others as not so good when they are merely different. This is an important point for the teacher of

² Margaret Mead, *The School in American Culture* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1951).

adolescents to bear in mind—because he will teach all kinds of young people, most of whom will differ from himself in appearance, speech habits, outlook on life, talents, and interests.

Becoming a teacher means rubbing shoulders with all kinds of people. For many beginners this will come as a shock, but for others it will be one of the chief rewards of the profession. Probably most of us have found our friends among others in the same social sphere as ourselves. If we were reared in a city, our circle of friends was drawn from the occupational level of our parents, and we met few people from other occupational levels. Our associations have been similarly limited by the church we preferred, by the neighborhood we lived in, by the elementary and high schools we attended, by the college we chose. Those of us from smaller cities and towns may have a wider social acquaintance, but for close associations we are unlikely to step outside a rather narrow boundary. Going to college cuts us off from many kinds of people in a community.

Most significant still, few of us have known at all well individuals of other racial or ethnic groups. They are rarely close friends; in school we seldom had prolonged contact with them, and certainly we did not visit in their homes or attend church with them. Thus members of minority groups (who, if they were all counted, would constitute a majority of our population) are unknown quantities. We do not know how they feel or act or live. Similarly, those from minority groups have had limited personal experience with the white Protestant "old-resident" group in the community, and may feel ill at ease and outside it all.

As teachers, however, we do not pick and choose our students. If there is a large Negro community, a significant number of recent immigrants from Europe or Puerto Rico, a neighborhood only recently built up of new residents from another state, children from all these groups will enter the school. As a high school teacher, your feelings about these groups deserve close examination.

The questionnaire³ on pages 70 and 71 may be useful in assessing your own feelings of separation from minority groups. Try to fill out both parts independently of each other; then compare your responses.

If there is a marked discrepancy between the responses to Parts I and II, you might examine the implications. It has been found

³ Jean D. Grambs, "Are We Training Prejudiced Teachers?" *School and Society*, 71:196-198, April 1, 1950.

fairly common for students entering teaching to feel quite unemotional about members of minority groups as children in their classes, but to have very definite feelings about such groups when it came to living arrangements. The question to ask here would be, "If I couldn't visit with a feeling of ease in the homes of these people, how can I genuinely feel that my classroom attitudes toward their children will be similar to those I have for all other children?"

It is difficult indeed to divorce out-of-class feelings from in-class behavior. The teacher who recognizes these reactions will be a long way on the road toward reducing their impact on students. If the prospective teacher feels so strongly about one or another group in the national community that it would drastically interfere with his ability to handle the group fairly, then it may be wisest to avoid teaching altogether.

Prejudice has no place in the classroom. Our obligation to society is to provide equal opportunity for all. Our own feelings can interfere with this equality if we are blind to them ourselves. It is not easy, understandably, for us to deal with a mixed class if all our experience has been with one group only. How does a Negro feel? Can one discuss religion objectively when there are Catholics and Jews in the same class? How about the problems of the immigrant in the United States when Joe and Susy and Fred have foreign-born parents who do not even now speak English? For the sensitive teacher, these problems are acute. One way out is to avoid all controversial areas. We do not discuss tolerance because it means discussing prejudice as well, and we might inadvertently step on someone's toes. This is the ostrich approach. And it doesn't work.

A recognition of group differences does have a place in the classroom. With teacher guidance, young people can learn not only to accept themselves but to accept others who are not like themselves. We have become increasingly concerned with this problem, not only because failure to accept difference prevents full personal development, but also because failure to accept difference leads to tension and conflict between groups.

The Supreme Court decision outlawing segregation in schools has focused national attention on the larger problem of accepting many different kinds of social and cultural groups in the school. Thousands of teachers, and many thousands of youngsters, are now in the process of moving from a segregated school situation to an

Part I. Place before each of the groups named below the number of the statement that most nearly expresses the way you feel about having children from any of these groups in your classes. Regard these children as representing an average socioeconomic status (not the highest you have known, nor the lowest). Do not leave any blanks.

1. I would go out of my way to ask for classes consisting of a large number of these children.
2. I would welcome children from this group in my classes.
3. I wouldn't care one way or another if children from this group were in my classes.
4. I'd rather not have any children from this group in my classes—at least not more than one or two.
5. If I had a class made up mostly of children from this group, I would request a transfer or resign.

NUMBER	GROUP	NUMBER	GROUP
_____	1. Italian	_____	10. Armenian
_____	2. English	_____	11. Protestant
_____	3. Jewish	_____	12. "Okie" or "Arkie"
_____	4. Negro	_____	13. Canadian
_____	5. Scandinavian	_____	14. Japanese
_____	6. Polish	_____	15. Mexican
_____	7. German	_____	16. Chinese
_____	8. Catholic	_____	17. Portuguese
_____	9. Filipino	_____	18. Latin-American

integrated one. It is therefore imperative that every teacher be clear about the feelings and attitudes he may have toward groups other than his own. Otherwise he may unwittingly interfere with free, full, and equal educational opportunity for all.

Psychological Barriers between Teachers and Students

When the teacher stands before his class he appears as the symbol of all teachers. He is not just any adult—he is a *teacher*. All the attitudes and feelings and anxieties that students have built up in the past about teachers will influence the reaction to any particular teacher.

Part II. You are going to be a teacher in a community new to you. You have to find a place to live; you are also going to be called upon to have some contact with the parents of children in your class. Place before each of the groups listed below the statement that would most nearly express your feeling. Again, consider the groups as representing an average socioeconomic status. Do not leave any blanks.

1. I would go out of my way to board in the home of people in this group.
2. I would welcome having these people as neighbors.
3. I do not have strong feelings one way or another about social contacts with people in this group.
4. I would accept a dinner invitation from parents of children in class who were in this group, but I would prefer not to live in the same neighborhood with them.
5. I would be willing to talk to parents of children in this group if they came to the school, or even make an afternoon visit to their home, but I would not accept any other contact.

NUMBER	GROUP	NUMBER	GROUP
_____	1. Jewish	_____	10. Italian
_____	2. German	_____	11. "Okie" or "Arkie"
_____	3. Polish	_____	12. Japanese
_____	4. Latin-American	_____	13. Canadian
_____	5. Negro	_____	14. Portuguese
_____	6. Scandinavian	_____	15. Protestant
_____	7. Mexican	_____	16. Armenian
_____	8. English	_____	17. Filipino
_____	9. Chinese	_____	18. Catholic

Although the teacher may be secretly somewhat afraid of these adolescents, at heart he does want to be a friend. What kind of picture does the term "teacher as friend" convey? Students can appreciate and respond to teacher interest, to the fact that a teacher seems to like them and even to appreciate their "corny" jokes. But is this friendship? Students may confide deep troubles, hidden ambitions, personal secrets—and yet the term *friendship* does not fully apply. Because this relationship is one-sided—or ought to be. The teacher can accept student confidences, but he cannot in turn use students as confidants. Always, between student and teacher, stands the inescapable fact that the teacher *is* the teacher.

As a teacher, he is responsible for grading and marking. He must

constantly judge how the student is performing. He may have to fail some students. He assigns awards; he gives recognition; he punishes misdemeanors.

Teachers serve as a "social conscience" for the student. No matter how much a teacher may sympathize with adolescent pranks and misdeeds, he is obligated both by society and by the students' needs to judge such behavior by accepted standards. Society expects the teacher to convey accepted moral values and behavior patterns to the young; a teacher who did not do this probably would not last very long at his job. This support of an adult value system extends even to the kind of language and usage that is considered proper in the school. Some of the ways in which we expect students to talk, if carried over into the home, would call down the ridicule of parents and playmates. Yet, in the classroom, other students would be shocked if the teacher did not correct consistently substandard usages! Since he functions as a social conscience, the teacher finds that the students cannot share with him the experiences that society outlaws.

Yet, though the teacher must exercise authority, must grade his students, must pass on the cultural standards of good and bad, he can still be the kind of friend who helps, who understands, who offers sound advice. In return, the teacher can expect loyalty, support, and the kind of affection that is built from respect and admiration. The major satisfactions of teaching are long-term. They come from watching students grow toward responsible maturity; from seeing one student change his view of himself from a failure to one who can succeed; from seeing another in a happy marriage; and from hearing now and then, perhaps indirectly, how he once helped.

While they are still in school, students are wary of their praise for teachers. It is too much like apple-polishing to tell a teacher how much his class has been enjoyed. The teacher will have to resign himself to seeing only slight clues of student appreciation and rarely having the students actually express how they feel. "How can I tell whether the students like me?" is a recurrent worry of the beginning teacher. We need the reassurance that students do like us, but they will not often tell us so. In the search for reassurance, some teachers may go to extremes in winning student approval. In almost every school there will be one teacher whose popularity with the students

is only a degree removed from undesirable familiarity. In trying to make sure that students will like them, some teachers are guilty of one or more of the following:

- Overgrading students when work is clearly not adequate.
- Using colloquialisms in speech that are appropriate for teen-agers but not for teachers.
- Dressing sloppily in a mistaken notion that this is being informal.
- Allowing students to call them by their first name or nicknames.
- Confiding in students: talking about the teacher's personal problems before the class or with groups of students.
- Helping or permitting students to break rules under the impression that this will help the teacher win the students' favor.
- Agreeing with students in criticizing other teachers or the school administration.
- Gossiping with students about their personal lives and that of school personnel; hinting in class about personal incidents relating to individuals in the class that are known to the teacher.
- Making personal comments to students about their appearance.
- Joking with students on their own level.

These actions reveal a lack of security. Few teachers actually win lasting satisfaction from the relations they develop by these means. Students appreciate a teacher who is genuinely interested in them, who is not a "stuffed shirt" or a "bluestocking," but they insist that adults act like adults. A teacher who has a circle of his own friends, who has his own family, rarely needs this extreme kind of reassurance. The hazard for the beginning teacher arises from an unfamiliar situation where one has neither friends nor family. But it is wiser to seek friends among the faculty and the townspeople than to look to high school students to fill this emotional need.

SUMMARY

In this chapter we started out by talking about adolescence. We looked at some of the major needs and developmental tasks that are

faced by adolescents during these crucial years, with particular concern for what they might imply for teaching practices.

But one cannot talk about adolescence without talking about how teachers and adolescents feel about each other. Thus we had to take a look at the cultural and social worlds inhabited by teachers and students—and they are likely to be very far apart indeed. Of particular importance is the teacher's attitude toward minority groups, which may prevent him from providing equal educational opportunities for all his students.

Finally, we discussed the psychological situation in which teacher and adolescent find themselves in the classroom, and which may itself be a source of teaching difficulties. Students and teachers bring many personal needs to school. The closer we as teachers come to recognizing our own needs, and the more objectively we understand what adolescents are telling us about themselves through their behavior, the more effective and rewarding teaching and learning will become.

It is important to remember that adolescents *do* like school. They may complain at great length, but study after study shows that most of them are genuinely glad to be in school, that they like their teachers, and that they even enjoy their schoolwork and recognize its value. Most adolescents, too, are grateful for the help and interest and guidance that teachers give them. They are more likely to do as they are asked, to obey a reasonable request, to respond to a friendly and interested adult, than they are to act like junior hoodlums. To the degree that we keep in mind the adolescent world, with all its emotional content and perplexing confusions, we make it possible for adolescents to act like the reasonable and responsible human beings they can be.

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The Curriculum of the High School

LEARNING DOES NOT OCCUR in a vacuum. The individual grows and develops in a society, and the society as well as the individual has needs that must be satisfied. Therefore there must be an organized scheme of learnings. With a plan, we can see to it that neither the individual's needs nor society's needs are slighted. Once this organized framework—the curriculum—is agreed upon, it is necessary to divide the guidance of the learning tasks among the high school staff. Such guidance will require detailed planning for the day, the month, the year. It will also require active consideration of the kind of classroom into which this planning must fit. But these related matters will be discussed in later chapters. Here we will concentrate on the over-all structure of the curriculum of the high school.

The curriculum, as we have said, should satisfy the needs of society as well as the needs of the individual student. It is extremely important that the high school student understand this dual purpose. *Early in high school he should realize what society will require of him and what he will need from society.* For example, society demands from the high school student that he know something about

the ways of government and his responsibilities to that government. He must know about the officers of federal, state, and local government in order that he may choose wisely for the good health of his society. But just as society has a right to make demands on him, the high school student has a right to expect that his own needs will be met. For example, he wants to know how best to develop his own talents and what the opportunities will be to employ them in a satisfying way. As he goes through high school, he must always see clearly that what he is doing will help him to live effectively as a person in a society.

The dual responsibilities of the high school have not always been clearly seen. Consequently, the curriculum has not always been concerned with what the *student* needs as a person. Curricular patterns have not always taken into consideration the factors we discussed in the last chapter. Instead, the high school curriculum has been much more concerned with what *society* needs of the student. As we shall see in a moment, even with that preoccupation the high school has not always moved fast enough to satisfy social expectations, but at least high school curriculum planners did direct their best efforts to this end.

Historical Backgrounds of the Curriculum

Let us see how the new emphasis in the high school curriculum came to be. The high school has inherited a heterogeneous array of traditions and patterns, some imported, some typically American. The whole story of the American school system is that of an institution slowly adapting itself to changing social needs. Several particularly significant historical factors must be kept in mind in considering the curriculum of the modern high school:

In *eighteenth-century America*, education above the "reading, writing, arithmetic" level was thought to be primarily for the gentleman, and for the special occupations pursued by gentlemen: the ministry, law, letters, medicine, teaching.

Nineteenth-century America felt that the opportunity to be among "gentlemen" should be open to all. Public education became

mass education. Still, even in 1890, the high schools enrolled only a small percentage of adolescents.

Early twentieth-century America became increasingly aware that democracy required an intelligent choice among genuine alternatives. Only literate individuals could understand the issues involved. Therefore, everyone needed to be educated. This concept became the cornerstone of the proposition of compulsory education.

In later twentieth-century America the need for the labor of children and youth decreased. The harder it is for young people to get jobs, and the less desirable society deems it for young people to work, the more likely we are to find them in school. Nor can we ignore the rising aspiration level of Americans. High school education has been regarded as the big escalator, on which families hoped their children would ride up.

How do these historical social forces, briefly summarized above, find expression in the curriculum? Two of them are especially important: first, the tradition that the real task of the high school is to prepare students for college; second, the countering force of vast new numbers of students who do not intend to attend college.

The earliest high schools were attended for the most part by students whose parents could afford advanced schooling. The subjects taught were, by and large, useful for those who were going to practice the professions of the day. As high school education became accepted as part of the system of free public education—indeed, as part of the compulsory school pattern in many parts of the nation—more and more parents sent their children on to high school. The previous pattern of highly selected student bodies no longer existed. With more of the bright children also came more of the average and dull. More children came from homes where learning had little, if any, place; where parents themselves could scarcely read or write; where books and even newspapers were unknown.

The High School and Social Trends

What did the schools do in response to this new population? The central fabric remained virtually untouched, but assorted pieces

were now attached. The college-preparatory emphasis scarcely diminished through the decades, but at the same time various sequences were grudgingly added. These sequences were not especially intended to meet the needs of students but to satisfy the needs of society. Commercial majors, general majors, and majors in industrial arts, home economics, agriculture, and other fields became organized sequences so that the student not preparing for college might also obtain a diploma. Unfortunately, special courses in these sequences, such as business English and general mathematics, and sometimes the entire sequences, were often used as repositories for what were called "the academically inept." Only rarely did these other roads to high school graduation gain the status of the college-preparatory curriculum.

It is interesting to note that where a high school is small, the basic curriculum, the one that remains when all other courses are shorn away because of the lack of money, is the college preparatory curriculum.

One remote mountain high school enrolled, at the beginning of each year, about 150 students. At the end of the year this had usually dropped to about 120 or 110 as the spring round-up or marriage attracted various members of the student body. Of this school, about 5 students went on to college, 2 of them to the university, the rest to nearby junior colleges or state trade schools. The curriculum was fairly standard. Students had to take four years of English. Latin was offered, and one year of Spanish. Four years of social studies were required. As electives, the school provided two business courses, algebra and geometry, two art classes, two classes in home economics, two in industrial arts, and physical education. The sciences consisted of biology and chemistry in alternate years.

This curriculum represents common practice. The basic courses are directed primarily toward satisfying college entrance requirements. And the pace at which this instruction is conducted may effectively deny students not college-bound the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that they need as citizens in a democracy. Yet what percentage of high school students actually go on to college? The over-all figure for the United States is less than 30 per cent—less than one third of the student population. The rate varies by districts,

of course; some suburban high schools send as many as 75 per cent of their students to universities, colleges, and junior colleges, while many rural high schools send a very small percentage.

The huge new population in the high school has frozen into the curriculum the unit system of separate subjects and the division of the school day into fifty-minute periods. This plan has meant that each teacher could be a specialist, teaching one or two subjects five hours a day, five days a week, to one hundred and fifty or more students. The period is an accepted pattern in the American high school, where students may have English the first period, music the second, physics the third, lunch the fourth, United States history the fifth, physical education the sixth, and then go home.

Yet we know that learning involves the whole personality of the learner. It is influenced by what he had for breakfast, by the feelings he demonstrated when he got top score in an exam the period before, by the fact that the chair he sits in is too small, by the idea he has that the teacher likes Bill better than himself, by his father's statement that "I never understood that stuff myself." In other words, he learns in one piece. Even if he would, he cannot present only that part of him best suited to the learning job. In the high school we have tried to cut the student into pieces much as we cut up the school day. Around each piece we have erected a fence that is called variously "a logical sequence of subject matter" or "a prerequisite to . . .," but whatever rationale is used, we seem to forget that the problems of the adult citizen are not faced in tightly bounded areas of English or mathematics or social studies. We forget that this citizen is the same student who goes from class to class, being presented with bits of this and bits of that, largely unrelated concepts, skills, and attitudes. Somewhere, the relationships he has to see as an adult must be developed. For the most part, however, the accretion of the years in the high school curriculum has been a collection of temporary structures jointed to the existing structure, rather than a real building to meet students' needs either as individuals or as members of a society.

It must always be kept in mind that in the United States we attempt to bring secondary education to all the people at a time when no such pattern exists anywhere else in the world. Furthermore,

we undertook to complete this expansion of the high school within a comparatively short time. Although the number of young people fourteen to seventeen years of age increased by only about 60 per cent from 1890 to 1950, the high school enrollment for this period increased in excess of 1600 per cent.¹ When an institution grows at such a rate, many solutions to important problems are bound to be based on expediency. So it is with the curriculum of the high school. More people than ever before are "exposed" to the important ideas of our culture and to the important tools needed by an industrial civilization, yet we are not teaching at maximum efficiency. Much time is wasted on studies that have long since lost their significance in meeting either individual or social needs.

The Purposes of Secondary Education

Any curriculum should be examined carefully in terms of the fundamental objectives of education in a democracy. We should ask the following about the American high school:

Does it contribute to producing better citizens, better workers, better parents, better human beings?

Does it improve daily living now, as well as adult living later?

Does it help students meet some social or personal problems?

Does it serve those who will be the leaders today and tomorrow as well as those who will be the followers?

Does it make students desire to learn more, or does it kill all desire to continue education once school years are over? Does it enable students increasingly to direct their own learning?

Does it broaden the student's view of himself in the world, or does it strengthen his provincialisms and prejudices?

These fundamental purposes of education have been stated in a somewhat different fashion by the Educational Policies Commis-

¹ R. R. Brammell, *Your Schools and Mine* (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1952), p. 228.

sion, a group of distinguished educators and lay citizens appointed jointly by the National Education Association and the American Association of School Administrators.

The Objectives of Self-Realization

- Having an appetite for learning.
- Being able to speak clearly.
- Learning to read efficiently.
- Being able to write effectively.
- Solving problems of counting and calculating.
- Becoming skilled in listening and observing.
- Working to improve personal and community health.
- Participating in and observing sports and other pastimes.
- Developing intellectual interests.
- Appreciating beauty.
- Giving responsible direction to one's own life.

The Objectives of Human Relationship

- Retaining respect for humanity.
- Enjoying friendships.
- Working and playing with others.
- Observing the amenities of social behavior.
- Appreciating the family.
- Being skilled in homemaking.
- Maintaining democratic family relationships.

The Objectives of Economic Efficiency

- Knowing the satisfaction of good workmanship.
- Understanding the requirements for and opportunities in occupations.
- Succeeding in a chosen vocation.
- Maintaining and improving occupational efficiency.
- Appreciating the social value of an occupation.
- Planning the economics of personal life.
- Being an informed and skillful buyer.
- Taking measures to be protected as a consumer.

The Objectives of Civic Responsibility

- Being sensitive to the disparities of human circumstance.
- Acting to correct unsatisfactory social conditions.
- Seeking to understand social structures and processes.
- Having defenses against propaganda.
- Respecting honest differences of opinion.
- Maintaining a regard for the nation's resources.
- Measuring scientific advance by its contribution to the general welfare.
- Becoming a cooperating member of the world community.
- Respecting the law.
- Developing economic literacy.
- Accepting civic duties.
- Acting upon an unswerving loyalty to democratic ideals.²

It is evident that here individual and social needs have been placed in balance. As objectives, then, these are sound. But how shall we translate these objectives into curricular structures for the high school?

Curricular Reorganization: But How?

In recent years two basic reports on high school education have tried to translate educational objectives into curricular structures. One was a report by the Harvard University faculty, *General Education in a Free Society*.³ The other was published by the Educational Policies Commission, which sponsored the statement of objectives cited above. This report was called *Education for All American Youth*.⁴ The Harvard group saw no great advantage to rebuilding the high school curriculum. Instead, the committee believed, greater

² Adapted from Educational Policies Commission, *The Purposes of Education in American Democracy* (Washington, D. C.: National Education Association, 1938), pp. 50, 72, 90, 108.

³ *General Education in a Free Society* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1945).

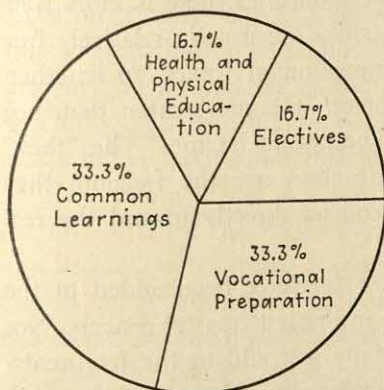
⁴ Educational Policies Commission, *Education for All American Youth: A Further Look* (Washington, D. C.: National Education Association, 1952).

unity of purpose among the course offerings and better methods of instruction would achieve the objectives sought.

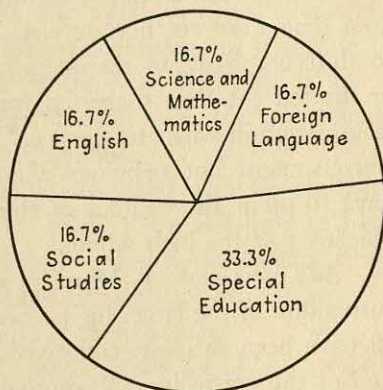
The Educational Policies Commission report, on the other hand, proposed a number of basic modifications. The school day was to be made more flexible, allowing larger blocks of time where needed. Into some of these longer periods was to go a core course. The course was designated "core" because it focused on the core social processes: *family living, governing, distributing goods and services, consuming, communicating, appreciating beauty*. Toward these central concerns of individuals and societies were to be directed the concepts, skills, and attitudes from many fields of study. The course was to be called "Common Learnings" because it cut across many of the old separate subjects of the high school to provide a commonly needed general education.

We can see the contrast in curricular emphasis by a glance at the accompanying charts.

EDUCATIONAL POLICIES COMMISSION



HARVARD



Both plans provide for two thirds of general education and one third of special education. In the Educational Policies Commission report, however, the special education is more strictly vocational in intent. And within the provisions for general education are differences we have already noted. English, social studies, science, mathematics, and foreign languages disappear as required separate general-

education courses. All may appear, of course, either as elective courses in general education or in vocational preparation.

The Teacher Implements School Purposes

How can beginning teachers work within the framework proposed by each report? *Let us begin with the Harvard plan.* Basically, most high schools retain the kind of curriculum endorsed by the Harvard plan. Remember that the Harvard committee was convinced that the objectives of the high school could be achieved by greater unity of purpose and better methods of instruction. Other sections of this book discuss methods of instruction at length. Here we will concentrate on ways in which the beginning teacher can help to bring more unity to the curriculum.

Change the content of courses. It is the rare school system that prescribes exactly what must be taught. Suggested outlines of instruction abound. Nevertheless, within these outlines there is more freedom than most teachers accept. Teachers are usually relatively free to shift emphasis, to rearrange organization of topics, to lengthen or shorten the time suggested for topics. It is more often than not rationalization when teachers say, "They won't let me." The "they" is convenient but nebulous. Good teachers use the freedom they have to point the content of their courses directly toward the real objectives of the high school.

Add new courses. Many new courses have been added to the curriculum of the larger high schools in the last quarter century. Not all have been carefully conceived. Many just add to the fragmentation of the curriculum. Beginning teachers should support the addition of new courses only when they fill a gap in the curriculum; otherwise, they should work for more functional use of the present courses.

✓ *Correlate the content of courses.* In many high schools teachers do not clearly understand what others in the same field of study are doing. In one school a beginning teacher organized a series of coffee hours during which fellow department members were encouraged to

tell informally just what they were trying to teach. In this way each could see better how to coordinate his efforts with those of the others.

It is much more difficult, of course, to correlate the work of different departments. But it is not impossible. One beginning teacher offered to make a chart for his department head to serve as a basis for discussion in interdepartmental meetings. The chart looked something like the one below.

COURSES

Objectives	English 1	English 2	English 3	U.S. History	World History	Social Problems
Self-realization Speaking clearly Reading efficiently and so on						

The beginning teacher's department met with only one other department that year and listed on the chart just which content applied to each objective. Only the barest beginning in correlation of content had been made at the end of the year. However, it was a rewarding effort because, in a number of small ways, the two departments helped each other with their problems.

In another school a young teacher discussed with his students the objectives of the high school. He asked them not only to help him keep the work in his course directed toward these objectives but also to call to his attention at any time the work of other classes in this direction on which his class could lend assistance.

✓ Fuse the content of courses. To achieve the broad purposes of the high school, some courses belong together. We have seen a gradual trend toward these "broad-fields" courses: general science, social living, general mathematics. Beginning teachers are often called upon to teach these new courses because others are reluctant to undertake the burden of planning a new field of study. If beginning teachers accept these assignments willingly and carry them out successfully, they will make a genuine contribution to a better high school curriculum.

Primarily, efforts like these will bring about better communication among members of the high school teaching staff. If the beginning teacher thinks of the responsibility in this light, he may be less awed by the task. Teachers like to tell what they are doing, and they are not invited to by their colleagues often enough. If the beginning teacher shows genuine interest in the work of an experienced teacher in another department, it is the rare veteran who will not delight in relieving him of his ignorance. Once properly informed, the beginner can tell other old hands in still other departments of his amazement about what he has learned. It is only human for "the other departments" to retaliate by saying, "This is fine, but let me tell you what we're doing." From this point on, the cycle is self-perpetuating. Not only will the whole staff gain in clearer knowledge about the curriculum, but the beginner will have made a warm place for himself among his colleagues.

The Teacher and Curricular Change

Now let us turn to *Education for all American Youth* to see how beginning teachers can help implement the program outlined. Here the task is obviously more difficult. To break down the tight compartments of the present high school curriculum calls for courage and tenacity.

Teachers themselves have long been trained in colleges and universities whose departments strictly maintain the same course boundaries. English teachers, for example, do not leap at the opportunity to teach "common learnings" courses, where they must cope with social studies, science, and mathematics. Furthermore, there are no textbooks, or, indeed, other instructional materials, designed especially for core courses. Still, exasperatingly slow as progress must be toward curricular revision as fundamental as this, the beginning teacher should not be persuaded to abandon the attempt before he has even begun to try.

"To begin to try" usually means that the beginning teacher must first establish himself as a good teacher under the present curriculum. Then his colleagues, both teachers and administrators, will be more

willing to listen to his suggestions for curricular revision. This is also important for the public relations of the school. Experienced teachers and administrators know that the quickest way to arouse community criticism is to revise the curriculum. But if the beginning teacher knows his community and the community knows him as a good teacher, the danger is at least minimized.

Too often the beginning teacher has forgotten how much communities resist changes in schools. He may not have been reminded of this fact at all by the department of education in which he prepared for teaching. Consequently, when he tries to apply new ideas before he has been accepted as a competent teacher, he is rudely shocked by the cold resistance he encounters. All too often, then, he joins the older teachers in dismissing the new ideas as "educational theory" and reverts to the kind of education he has had most of his life. It is better to face the facts of high school life from the beginning and calculate the mortality risks in proposing curricular experiments.

What are the steps in preparing a community and its high school for curricular revision? What part can the beginning teacher play?

Study successful attempts to revise the curriculum. The beginning teacher should become acquainted with recent efforts to revise the curriculum. Here his best current resources are the professional periodicals and yearbooks. In particular, the publications of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development⁵ should serve him well. And the yearbooks of the National Society for the Study of Education⁶ often include reports of curriculum projects.

The beginner will want to know about efforts that have been made in his own state. State departments of education are always happy to supply reports about new projects. The neophyte may be surprised to learn of enterprises "right next door." In particular, he may find modest, informal studies being conducted as "action research."⁷ Such nearby projects are especially encouraging because

⁵ See, for example, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, *What Shall the High School Teach?* (Washington, D. C.: The Association, 1956).

⁶ Published by The University of Chicago Press.

⁷ See, for example, S. M. Corey, *Action Research to Improve School Practices* (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1953).

those who sponsored the work can be interviewed about all the practical details.

Review the present curriculum. Faculties may be ready to appraise the limitations of the present curriculum if they are reminded often enough of successful experiments. Parents' committees should assist in this review, as in all subsequent steps toward curricular revision.

Summarize some of the key problems in today's world. What we teach is inevitably a little behind the times. It is healthy for a beginning teacher to try to state, at least for himself, what pressing demands the world is soon going to make on the adolescents he teaches. Perhaps it is wiser to begin with something less than the demands of "the world," although certainly his thinking should eventually project that far. But any beginner, if he looks around even cursorily, can see issues in the community where he teaches. He can see at least where his teaching touches on these rather immediate demands of a social group. Later, he may be able to extend his analysis to state, nation, and world.

Determine students' needs and developmental tasks. In the previous chapter these needs and developmental tasks were discussed in some detail. The hard job is to make what we know about youth affect our teaching. Certainly no beginner will be able to apply all he knows. But at least he can be aware that these factors exist and will influence his success in teaching every day. Gradually, he will see more ways to use what he knows.

Identify the objectives of the school. Many teachers will begin their teaching careers in brand-new high schools. The tremendous surge of population, which began to hit the high schools in 1956, has forced the building of new schools in unprecedented numbers. Even existing school staffs are affected, because experienced teachers are shifted to new schools, thus making room for beginning teachers in older schools. All these changes in student population and teaching staff will continue to force reconsideration of school programs for years to come.

Beginners will often be invited to join committees that attempt this reconsideration. It would be a mistake not to accept this opportunity with alacrity. The work will be onerous and progress will be

slow. But the beginner has the great advantage of recent education. If he is discreet, he can use this advantage for the improvement of his school's curriculum.

The beginning teacher should familiarize himself with several authoritative discussions of curricular reconstruction in the high school. The works of Alberty, Alexander, Conant, Douglas, Faunce, French, Leonard, and Saylor, to name just a few, have many concrete suggestions on curricular design. The beginner can guide curriculum committees in his school out of many impasses by tactfully suggesting some of the alternatives proposed in these careful analyses by experienced consultants.

Prepare curricular resource materials. The revision cannot succeed unless materials with which teachers and students can work have been carefully prepared. The resources will, of course, not be complete, but they ought to be extensive enough to give each class a good start.

Most of the national professional organizations in the basic fields of instruction provide, through their publications, good models to guide curriculum committees. Perhaps the best discussion of the resource unit is in Quillen and Hanna's *Education for Social Competence*.⁸ Over a period of years many of the nation's school systems have developed excellent resource materials, which can usually be obtained for the guidance of new curriculum committees.

This step-by-step approach to curricular revision assumes years of patient effort. Too much cannot be expected too fast. The beginning teacher can best play his part by helping to get the process of revision under way. He cannot be expected to be the main source of momentum once it has begun. Progress will be made only if the public, the students, the other teachers, and the administrators all work together. Even then, change will be slow.

Factors Opposing Curricular Change

Why do the schools change so slowly? Why are the findings of research often applied years after they have been published and

⁸ I. J. Quillen and Lavone Hanna, *Education for Social Competence*. (Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1948).

accepted? Within the classroom, the high school today is in many ways as outdated as the buildings that are still in use in some parts of the country. Why?

First, we must remember that people are essentially conservative in those areas of life that affect them most deeply, such as religion, government, and education.

Second, many people remember their own schooling; it is familiar to them, and it is difficult to foresee how newer methods could work or be effective. There is rarely *overwhelming* experimental evidence to substantiate proposed changes, and where there is, the cases are often not typical—or so we tend to think.

Third, those factors that assist in giving the curriculum its shape, such as the textbook, the courses of study, and the hour periods, affect many other aspects of the school and the school system. To change a given teacher's course may have far-reaching effects on many other persons and programs. The greater the number of people who are affected by such change, the more difficult it is to make the change.

Fourth, teachers themselves find it difficult to strike out in new paths. The reasons are not easily dismissed:

Teachers have trouble keeping in close enough touch with students to know whether newer practices really are acceptable to students or really make their teaching more effective.

Where direction has always come from some "authority," the teacher feels diffident about striking out alone in untried paths.

Newer approaches are usually more difficult: outcomes are less certain; criticism is not so easily answered; materials are not always available; more unexpected things are likely to occur.

The teacher is not always sure that the students are really "learning," since often the content and emphasis are very different from the traditional subject field.

The students as well as the teacher often do not know "what is expected," and this sense of lack of direction, lack of following established routines, is very unnerving for all involved.⁹

Since it is the individual classroom teacher who may, within limits, effect the important curricular changes, it is especially important for beginning teachers to develop an attitude of mind that welcomes new ideas and is willing to work for them.

⁹ H. A. Thelen, "Resistance to Change of Teaching Methods," *Progressive Education*, 26:208-214, May 1949.

Facing a New Challenge

Today many powerful forces have banded together to fight against proposed changes in the curriculum. The schools are under more savage attack than ever before. The reasons for this attack are many, but we can list only a few here:

Unprecedented increase in school enrollments.

Inflationary aspects of economy.

Increased taxation.

Increased world tension, with concomitant increase in personal anxiety and insecurity.

The confluence of these forces has put the schools in the unfortunate position of being the scapegoat. It is highly important that those entering the teaching profession today be alert to the temper of public opinion in order to be able to distinguish that criticism which is intended to strengthen school programs from that which aims to destroy. Educators must not allow American public schools to be undermined by capricious and destructive critics who speak only for a vociferous minority. The profession must constantly seek more and better avenues of communication among all levels of the community in order that, together, school and community may best find democratic solutions to the recurrent problems of education.

One of the sharpest critics of secondary education in recent years has been Arthur Bestor. His *The Restoration of Learning*¹⁰ discusses in detail the weaknesses he sees in the curriculum of the high school. Bestor believes that, for all adolescents, a common program in the traditional disciplines should be required, including science, mathematics, history, English, and foreign languages. Although all would study these same subjects, Bestor does suggest a multi-track organization that would permit some students to enter high school at the age of eleven and begin college at the age of seventeen. Others would become part of the high school student body at the age of twelve but begin studies on the high school level at the age of sixteen. For these students, secondary education might be continued until the age of twenty-five. In between these two extremes a number of other tracks, permitting different rates of progress, are suggested.

¹⁰ Arthur Bestor, *The Restoration of Learning* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1955).

These proposals are not made in the tempered tone of the scholar and they are surrounded by charges which most professional educators reject. Nevertheless, teachers in secondary education have a responsibility to submit both the proposals and the charges to exacting scrutiny. There is sufficient safeguard for a balanced view in the simple request: What evidence do we have, and what further do we need?

SUMMARY

In order to further the needs of both the individual and society, the learnings of the high school are organized into a curriculum. The high school curriculum has always been more concerned with the demands of society than with the needs of the individual. But even in attempting to meet society's demands, the curriculum of the high school has failed to keep pace. The old social demand was for college preparation, but now less than one third of the high school students go on to college. Still, the college-preparatory curriculum predominates. Furthermore, the courses within the curriculum are rigidly compartmentalized. The curriculum needs more unity of purpose and effort.

Two proposals came out of the years following World War II meet these deficiencies. One was prepared by the faculty of Harvard University, the other by the Educational Policies Commission. Each recognized that the high school has larger purposes than merely preparing students for college. These purposes, the reports agree, can be separated into those belonging to general education and those belonging to special education. The purpose of general education is to prepare all citizens to think critically, discriminate among values, communicate effectively; that of special education is to prepare students for vocations or for advanced study. The Harvard Committee believed both general and special education could be provided without changing the present curricular framework, even though it has been largely pointed toward preparation for college. All that was needed, according to the Harvard report, was to point the courses toward broader purposes and to work for unity of effort among the courses. The Educational Policies Commission, on the other hand,

saw the need for basic revision of the curricular framework. The school day was to be made more flexible. Into some of the larger blocks of time now provided were to go courses cutting across the old course boundaries. These common-learning courses were to focus on the core social processes (family living, governing, distributing goods and services, and so on), drawing on, as needed, the concepts, skills, and attitudes from many fields of study.

Whichever point of view is held, teachers have a responsibility to work toward the accepted goals of the high school. Within the old curricular framework, for example, teachers can work to change the content of courses, to correlate courses, and to fuse courses. In more thoroughgoing reorganization, curriculum committees will have to study promising experimentation. As new objectives are formulated and new curricular designs built, teachers must invite community assistance and take the long-term view. Change will come slowly. It is especially important that beginning teachers recognize this hard fact without defaulting on their responsibility to work for a better curriculum for the high school.

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- "The Public School Curriculum," *Harvard Educational Review*, 27 (Fall 1957). The entire issue is devoted to this topic. The editors express a hope that the articles included will stimulate readers to reexamine their notions about the curriculum. Articles include those by leaders in management and labor as well as by a professional educator, a historian, and an anthropologist.
- Rosenberger, Homer T. "Implanting Attitudes in Students: A Significant Function of the High School," *National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin*, 41:18-42 (March 1957). This discussion restates the necessity for implanting wholesome attitudes in secondary students and suggests how principals and teachers can do this.
- Rucker, D. C., Alice Pittman, Jessie Elliff, and A. Wellesley Foshay "Action Research Means Cooperation," *Educational Leadership*, 7: 164-170 (December 1949). Informal experimentation in the classroom requires united effort but brings action in improving curriculum.
- Tompkins, Ellsworth, and Walter H. Gaumnitz "The Carnegie Unit: Its Origin, Status and Trends." U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Education, Bulletin No. 7 (1954). Washington: Government Printing Office. Since the Carnegie Unit has had considerable influence on the organization of the curriculum, this review should be helpful as an orientation to curriculum planning.

Developing Democratic Behavior in the Classroom

A CURRICULUM is only a piece of paper until it reaches the classroom. There it comes alive. But the gift of life is not always the same. In one classroom, it may be quickened to the needs of individuals working out their common problems. In another, it may be charged with the needs of a regimen working its will on individuals. The teacher may honestly believe he is carrying out the same curriculum in both of these classrooms. And it may be a curriculum carefully dedicated to those accepted purposes of the high school in a democracy—purposes on which a committee like that of Harvard or that of the Educational Policies Commission could agree. Each teacher may be able to say with complete sincerity that he is laboring to develop the kind of democratic behavior envisioned in those purposes. Each may be honestly convinced that he himself is a democratic teacher.

What do we mean by "democratic?" It is very difficult to frame a definition on which we agree in the only way that really counts—in the way we act. Nations use the word in very different ways. Similarly, educators have difficulty in identifying the democratic classroom or the democratic teacher. Part of the trouble may be that so few of us have ever experienced a democratic classroom.

Defining the Democratic Classroom

Our schools, although taught by people of good will, are not necessarily democratic. As a matter of fact, one of the first things to remember is that "good will" in itself is not synonymous with "democracy." Let us first look at two classrooms:

Mr. Giffin thought of his students in Spanish 2. He wanted to be certain they understood that this language was a key to the culture. Suppose he broached the subject of bull fights? He might fill in some of the outlines of this traditional spectacle. Then, if he had caught them up in the excitement of this other world, he might open up a number of alternatives to them for further pursuit. Some might want to see a motion picture playing the neighborhood, The Brave Bulls. Others might want to check out those newspaper accounts from La Prensa that he had in the file. Then the library had a number of short stories in Spanish. The old Spanish-American residents in South Town would welcome a group of students come to interview them about their memories of the toreadors of their youth. There would be other possibilities the students themselves would suggest. They could work up the final plans for the unit together.

Mr. Conley was also planning his next week's work. "Now," said he to himself, "we have just finished the first real introduction to irregular verbs. Let me see"—quickly he picked up the textbook and checked the next chapter. "Ah, a discussion of the passive tense. Well, I guess next week we will spend time first on a review of the irregular verbs. It's so hard for those slow students who sit near the windows to remember anything. Then, after a quiz—I'll spring that on them so I can see who has really been studying—I'll go over the material in the next chapter. I guess they can do the exercises by

Tuesday, the paragraph translation by Wednesday, and Thursday we will have oral drill. Then Friday—Friday is the day of the game. I know they'll be all excited, so I guess to keep them in their seats I'd better have a test ready to come about the last half of the period."

Both of these teachers are doing a job of planning. Both act with good will. But let us look at the difference. One plans with an eye to both his subject matter and his students, trying to find the best meeting ground between them. The other has his subject matter before him and tries to fit the students to it, never concerned with students' needs. Which one is it easier to be? It is, unfortunately, easier to be Mr. Conley than Mr. Giffin. Mr. Giffin has to be flexible, to be aware of students, to have a great variety of teaching resources at hand. Mr. Conley can build the mold for weeks with a minimum consideration of students as persons and with the barest essentials in teaching materials.

But does that make Mr. Giffin democratic?

The teacher—any teacher—has knowledge, the teacher is an adult, the teacher is vested by law with authority, the teacher is surrounded by the aura of the parent. These "authorities" of the teacher, both open and hidden, are important. The students had no say in choosing Mr. Giffin to be their teacher. Neither, of course, did Mr. Giffin choose belligerent Tim Atkins or arrogant Jane Boothe for his class. Reluctant subjects and arbitrary leadership do not, in our usual sense of the word, make for a very democratic situation. Thus we need to redefine our terms somewhat if *democracy* can legitimately be joined to *education*.

Anthropologists and social psychologists have some light to shed on this subject. As Ruth Benedict has pointed out, there are many kinds of social systems that one can call "democratic" because each member of the group is able to live a good, protected, productive, individual existence. Yet they may look very different from our own political system.¹

Democratic education, then, must be considered primarily as a social system, devoted to developing better human relations. If the needs of students are being met, if they are progressively better able

¹ Ruth Benedict, "Recognition of Cultural Diversities in the Post-War World," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 228:101-107, July 1943.

to cope with their world, if they are developing increasing self-direction in the conduct of their own affairs, if they are able to seek more learning as a result of present learning experiences, then probably the classroom is a democratic one. And the teacher who arranges for such things to occur is then a democratic teacher.

Freedom within Rules

A democratic classroom has an orderly procedure established; there are rules that apply to various activities. If someone is giving a report, others listen; if a group member has an assignment, he must see that the assignment is completed because the group will need it. These and similar rules govern social living in any group, and certainly are acceptable in a classroom.

But what happens if the teacher establishes a rule that the students do not like?

In a science class, the teacher had stated that all of the class would have to finish every experiment in the unit being studied before anyone could proceed to the next unit. Three students finished very much before the others and spent a week in the library while the rest of the class caught up. But even at the end of the week, two students were still several experiments short. This meant postponing the next unit of work for another two or three days. The students felt that the teacher's rule had been arbitrary and should not be applied to succeeding units of work.

Obviously, the teacher had a good reason for this rule. Some general class instruction would be necessary before the whole class could proceed to the experiments in the next major unit of work. It would be inefficient to give this instruction to two or three students at a time, not to mention the difficulty of having supplies out for a number of different experiments simultaneously. However, the students also had a good point; the present rule benefited only the slowest students and penalized the fast ones for being ahead in their work. "Why get your work done ahead of time, or even on time?" said the students. "You still have to wait for the others."

Here is where the democratic teacher discusses with the class the reasoning behind the rule and the possible problems that might arise, and requests from the class a more acceptable solution. The class and the teacher may very well agree that all work should be

done by a certain time, and that when most of the class has done the required work, those who are still behind may come in at stated hours before and after school, during study hour or lunch period, to get their assignments out of the way. Those who are ahead may either help the others or do special related reading for the next unit and make a class presentation.

What if the rule is a school rule and such deviations and compromises are not allowed? The students are then in no position to change it. In that case, the whole problem of rules and what to do about them should be aired. Why do we have rules anyway? In a game there are very definite rules, and these are what make the game. We do not change the rules just because they put a temporary handicap on our side. Rules are used in a democracy to ensure good order and fair play. Students need to make an objective examination of this function of rules in a democracy. In this study they will discover that when a rule is contrary to common sense and actually impedes the purpose it was designed to achieve, an orderly method of changing the rule is sought. This way we may have freedom within security.

Rules are only one element of the kind of classroom security that produces a democratic atmosphere. Another element is a clear-cut recognition by both student and teacher of the other's role and areas of responsibility. The teacher who seeks to have a democratic classroom must not fool his students into thinking that they have more freedom and power than he is really willing to grant.

Miss Willow was dissatisfied with the routine of the class that she had inherited in mid-term from another teacher. In this class the schedule was: Read assigned chapter Monday and Tuesday, answering questions at end of chapter. Wednesday, discuss questions. Thursday, have more question recitation, then a short quiz. Friday, discuss current events. Miss Willow suggested a more active kind of learning situation, with projects, debates, different kinds of readings, etc. After some talk in class, the students voted; and they voted to keep their usual routine. At this Miss Willow became angry, and told the students they would have to try things her way anyway. The students became rather bitter over her previous fine comments on democracy and freedom.

This teacher was not genuinely willing to let the class choose, and yet she had provided the freedom for the class to choose. The

class learned to mistrust her. The class had no security regarding the teacher's role in the class. *The teacher, in a democratic situation, must be willing to take the consequences of freedom granted.* If the students cannot reasonably be expected to make a wise choice, through lack of necessary experience or knowledge, then obviously the teacher should not offer the choice.

Genuine Choices

In a democratic classroom, choices are available. After all, freedom does mean freedom to choose. But among what kinds of things can students choose? First, the choices must be real. When people vote in totalitarian countries, they only vote "yes." We do not want Miss Willow's democracy in our classrooms.

The concept of choice is essential to democratic teaching just as it is essential to a democratic society. What choices does the democratic teacher provide? How can he tell whether the choices he provides are genuine? We know that young people do not know all the consequences of their acts. If students had their own way about it, how many would stay in school every day for the required length of time? The student does not choose whether or not to come to school—he has to come. It is all the more important, then, that classrooms give him many opportunities to develop the ability to make wise choices in those social and personal areas where he does know the consequences. Otherwise, one essential democratic skill will not be developed.

Of course, *the teacher*, by virtue of age, training, experience, legal authority, and tradition, *must establish some limits in choices of subject matter and method.* In many areas it is the teacher who knows best. Obviously, we would not want young people to choose whether to study for six weeks spelling and nothing else or lyric poetry and nothing else. These are not realistic alternatives. The teacher, however, may discuss with the class the importance of having reasonable amounts of both activities. Then the class may choose, perhaps, the days for spelling, or methods of getting spelling lists that include the most troublesome words, or ways of presenting the poetry for maximum enjoyment.

Suppose that a teacher decides to discuss with a class alternatives

to a final examination. What criteria have we to guide us in this kind of choice situation? First, the teacher may well explain to the class why a final examination is to be given. He will say, for example, that he needs this information about the progress that individuals have made in the class. However, the students may point out that there are other means of obtaining evidence about their progress. The teacher who seeks to be democratic has an obligation to think through with his students the common goal that they have, and then examine carefully the means that are available to achieve that goal. The discussion might sound like this:

TEACHER: A final exam helps you organize your thinking.

STUDENTS: But we could do the same thing in a paper, and that would give us more time to show what we really could do.

TEACHER: In college you will need to take many final exams; it helps to learn how to work quickly and accurately.

STUDENTS: But many of us are not going on to college; perhaps only the college-bound students ought to take the final.

TEACHER: I need some comparable evidence, however; it wouldn't be fair to judge a few on a final exam and the rest on a written report—the results might be so different.

STUDENTS: Then could we all do both activities, and you take the highest grade that an individual makes, whether on the exam or on the report, since some of us do better on reports and some on exams.

This interplay provides a framework within which democratic education may operate. If student needs are ignored or suppressed and only the opinions and demands of the teacher and the institution are followed, there can be no democracy. Thus the question—Do students have a right to vote against a final examination?—can only be answered when both teacher and students are informed of the needs, interests, motives, limitations, and goals of the other. Only after students are helped to recognize the consequences of their choices are they fully able to make choices. *The democratic teacher's function is to guide students so that they become increasingly able to choose among increasingly significant alternatives.* After all, the major decisions in life are somewhat above the level of spelling versus the lyric poets. In life, the boys and girls themselves are choosing whether to disobey their parents and stay out with the gang, whether to spend their money on a new dress for an important date or save it for some possible college expenses three years from now. Such choices

do have broad implications for the young people involved; the democratic classroom provides essential experience to develop the ability to choose intelligently.

Let us not confuse the concept stated above with the requirement that every time a decision is to be made, the whole class must participate. This kind of "democracy" is just as futile and frustrating as no democracy at all. One can take a lesson from society itself; many decisions are so obvious, so insignificant, that often we do not know we are making them. We do not consciously decide whether to put on our left shoe rather than our right shoe first. This is habit. Nor, in a classroom, must all learning stop while the class ponders the problem of whether books should be passed up the aisle from the left or from the right. The concept of orderly living can and must pervade the classroom much as it pervades a home. In a classroom, however, there are thirty youngsters and one adult to be managed, and the average home only deals with two children and two adults—a vastly different problem in management of human patterns. Because of this complexity, the democratic classroom does demand many group decisions.

Besides developing an essential democratic skill, the opportunity to choose means better motivation of the learner. He is involved from the beginning because he has a choice in the direction the learning will take.

The literature book used in a tenth-grade English class started with Beowulf and progressed chronologically to modern essays and stories. The teacher had found that to start at the beginning of the book was a great handicap, since the selection from Beowulf was one of the most difficult in the whole book. Therefore, at the beginning of the semester, he would pass out the textbook and ask the students to look the book through carefully. Then he would discuss the various sections of the book, pointing out some of the more interesting and important selections to be found. He answered questions about the book that the students raised. Almost a whole class period was spent in this exploratory experience. Toward the end of the period, he asked the class to gather in small groups of four. Each group was to reach a consensus about where in the text they would like to start. The reports were then given to the teacher, who proceeded to start his work in literature on the basis of the students' choices. Although no two classes ever wanted to start in the same place, he

found that he covered the same ground eventually. But because he started with an area in which most of the students had some interest, the class was more amenable to following his lead into areas of lesser interest.

Choice here became a facilitating factor in learning. Choice meant *active participation*. In an election, people often say that their candidate is just the lesser of two evils; but the fact that they express preference for one candidate over the other endows the whole process with considerably more interest. So it is in learning. Even though students may have had at the outset little interest in literature, the very process of choosing makes them evaluate, makes them look at the possibilities and seek something "good" about one or the other. *Then, having chosen, the students develop a stake in the subject area; the students feel it is theirs, because they had an active role in selecting it.* The teacher may of course find that in spite of this, student interest lags. The wise teacher will not then say, "What's wrong with you? After all, you decided to study this material." It will not help to flail the class for being unable to sustain interest in its own choice. Having once created a situation in which students make a positive choice toward some learning experience, the teacher must help in sustaining this expressed interest. Merely allowing a class to choose and then expecting the expressed interest to solve all further problems of motivation is not merely foolish—it won't work. Nevertheless, by providing the springboard of choice, the teacher has at least obtained an initial impetus moving students toward worthwhile learning.

But, says the skeptic, what if the students choose to do nothing? Isn't that one of the alternatives we must allow them in a democratic framework? Of course not. A person has no choice in a democracy about whether or not he will obey the law. Law is the framework that makes it possible for everyone to have maximum freedom. Without laws, we would be at the mercy of the whims and passions of anyone, and the most powerful and most selfish would destroy the others. Thus, in the classroom, students cannot have the alternative *not to learn* as a conscious choice, although often it is an unconscious decision of which the teacher must be aware. Part of the personal obligation of living in a society is that one is educated

in the ways of that society. The obligation of the teacher is to stretch every possible resource to bring this learning to every student. The teacher cannot let the student choose *nothing!* Probably many teachers who would accept the necessity of choice in democratic procedures outside the classroom balk at allowing much choice in school, fearing that students would choose not to learn. Certainly we must justify what we teach both psychologically and sociologically. Then we can say that a democratic classroom does not permit the decision not to learn; it does permit and encourage the development and the exercise of the ability to choose various paths to learning, various objects of study, various methods of evaluating learning, various goals toward which one may strive through learning.

So far we have discussed two major criteria of democratic education, with some of their implications for classroom practice. These two are—

Freedom within rules.

Significant areas of choice.

There are four more that must be considered—

Participation by all members.

Feeling of responsibility on the part of all members.

Sense of being valued.

Experimental approach to subject matter.

Let us see the application of each of these criteria to classroom practice.

Participation by All

It is obvious from the discussion of choice as a factor in the democratic classroom that class members must participate actively in the direction of learning. It is impossible to present genuine choices without an active response on the part of the students. There are, however, even broader implications. Students not only enter into active choice regarding the class, its procedures, and its content, but they are given an opportunity to increase their participation as they grow in skill, insight, and understanding.

A democratic teacher starts slowly, allowing students to expand their area of activity as they demonstrate ability to do so. Democratic ordering of society is one of the most demanding kinds of social control that man has ever devised. In a democratic classroom, students *grow into* wider and wider spheres of participation, although the amount and type of participation will vary from one individual to another. Some students are better able to lead, and these students are encouraged to assume more and more leadership; other students excel at solving problems, and these students are expected more and more to share this ability with the class.

How does the teacher help to develop leadership among students? By allowing students to get to know each other in many intimate work situations, with both small groups and large, short-run and long-range, and by providing many kinds of leadership opportunities—collecting papers, reading notices, taking roll, leading a discussion, reporting on special research, making plans for a trip, serving on an evaluation committee—right up the ladder toward full and significant participation in what is going on.

But in its emphasis on participation, the democratic classroom is concerned not only with leadership. In such a classroom, few students can hold back, can be passive observers, having nothing to do with learning or with the teacher or with fellow students. The teacher does not win active, full participation merely by requesting it or by punishing those who do not participate. Rather, he must provide many opportunities for different talents to manifest themselves—choosing pictures for a bulletin board, maintaining the classroom library, becoming an expert on some special topic of personal interest related to the major content of the course. These and countless other small opportunities eventually provide an avenue for every student to become a participant. A democratic social order needs the intelligence of everyone to function; it cannot rely on the intelligence of its leaders alone.

Development of Responsibility

What does participation do to students? The more they can affect the world around them, the more they feel responsible for

what they do. The great complaint of adults about youth today is that "they have no feeling of responsibility." And how, one asks, can they acquire a feeling of responsibility in a world that allows youth to make so few important decisions, that gives youth so few important jobs to do? There is a direct relationship between participation and responsibility; it is certain that responsibility cannot be learned without participation. This sense of responsibility is increased when participation is related significantly to the adult world. Too often the students feel that there are two distinct worlds—the in-school world and the out-of-school world, and the one that is more important is out-of-school. The teacher therefore should constantly seek those bridges between school and community that relate the learning of the classroom to daily living.

Sense of Being Valued

The phrase "all men are created equal" points to a fundamental assumption underlying our democratic society: that all individuals equally deserve the respect and protection of the social group. People are far from being equal in talents, in contributions to society, in an infinite number of other characteristics. But in a democratic social order each human being has a value merely because he is a human being. Similarly, in the democratic classroom, every student feels that he, as a person, is given as much consideration as every other student. Each student recognizes that his needs, interests, motivations, and goals—wholly personal and subjective and unique—are carefully considered in the total learning process. How does this differ from many classrooms?

A democratic classroom does not distribute its rewards on a narrow basis. *It is what is learned that is important.* Each person is given the maximum opportunity to achieve learning *in his own way.* True, these individual differences make democratic teaching difficult, since in one classroom reading, for example, may range from fourth-grade level to twelfth-grade level. The teacher who genuinely values each student as a person has an obligation to find reading materials suited to each level and to help every student, regardless of his reading level, to better performance.

What we feel about ourselves is the key to our happiness; if we feel that we are good, that others like us and our particular characteristics, then we are better able to deal successfully with the problems of home and job. The school has an obligation to give each person a clear view of himself, but in that process to help him feel that he is a good person. Delinquents among young people are often those students who feel that no one likes them and who, in turn, do not like themselves.

The democratic classroom therefore creates situations in which each student feels valued, feels that he *does* have a genuine contribution to make to something that others, his peers, deem important.

The Experimental Approach to Learning

A final criterion that may be used in the evaluation of the democratic classroom is actually implicit in what has already been discussed. Democratic classroom procedure depends to a greater and greater extent on the experimental approach. In this approach, *nothing is known until it is tried out*.

We accept this thesis in the realm of athletics. We would not expect a student to learn tennis by reading a book about it. We know that he cannot know the game until he has had much contact with tennis rackets, balls, courts, rules. Democratic education utilizes this *inquiring approach* in dealing with other subject matter. In United States history the teacher will develop an understanding of government through intensive interviews in the field with governmental officers of all kinds rather than depending merely on the textbook for the discussion of government. In English, the radio, newspapers, magazines, current novels, and literary criticism become the basis for developing judgments about good writing, rather than just selections in the English text anthologies.

Democratic education, it is clear, is not merely a matter of method and relationship, nor merely a matter of content; democratic education utilizes both content and method to achieve democratic ends. Some observers have attempted to see a difference here, and to put either method or content in a prior position. But a careful analysis of what actually happens to the student in the classroom

shows clearly that the *best method will fall far short of its fullest promise if the content is sterile, and the best content will be rendered ineffective if the method of instruction is inappropriate.*

Evaluating the Democratic Classroom

It is possible to elaborate the criteria listed in the preceding section into an index against which the "degree of democracy" being exercised in any classroom can be measured. One warning, however, must be carefully heeded. Democracy in education is a *developmental concept*. Students are not naturally democratic. *Democratic behavior is learned.*

Learning democratic behavior is one of the most difficult of all learnings, since it demands so much of every individual in the way of selflessness, responsibility, and objectivity. Many teachers must start with groups of students who are unskilled in democratic procedures and relationships. These classrooms will, of course, look different from those where democratic skills are well developed. Democracy in the classroom will also look different depending on the age of the students and the subject. After all, seniors in high school can usually be given much more freedom of choice than freshmen. With these warnings in mind, observers may ask, as they watch a classroom in action, questions such as these:

1. *Are students able to make genuine choices?*

Are increasingly significant areas of choice provided to develop more adult discrimination among alternatives?

Does the teacher seem genuinely open-minded about choices the students may make?

Does the teacher follow through on the choices students make?

Do students, in talking about their class work, often use such phrases as, "We decided to do this," or "When we chose that . . .?"

2. *Do students have freedom?*

Do students have freedom in making rules?

Do students have freedom of movement? Are they free to move around the room if they are engaged in purposeful activities? Is there a relaxed give-and-take among students, not only about the material being studied but about other school and personal affairs?

3. Are students participating in all classroom activities?

Is participation well distributed among the class members?

Do students participate in planning important phases of the program?

Do students participate in the evaluation of class and individual learning?

4. Are students developing responsibility commensurate with their age?

When students agree on a project, do they follow through on their decision and complete the work according to standards of good workmanship, and without prodding or threats?

Do students increasingly take responsibility for one another by volunteering to help those needing special assistance?

Do students and teacher share responsibility if something goes wrong with their class plans?

5. Do the students feel valued as individuals?

Are students of low ability taking an active part in class activities?

Are superior students making unusual contributions to the class?

Are opportunities available for developing special interests and talents?

6. Does the subject matter relate to significant democratic goals?

Is subject matter at every possible point related to real-life situations faced by youth or adults in our culture?

Are the ethical bases of democratic processes made explicit throughout the course?

Is subject matter constantly revised in the light of changing social needs?

The democratic teacher is striving toward these goals, though some may be achieved sooner than others. One teacher may be better able to relate content to daily living; another may give students a real sense of being valued. Each teacher has strengths worth conserving; the democratic teacher recognizes these strengths and seeks to minimize his areas of lesser competence.

Democratic versus Autocratic or Laissez-faire Leadership

At this point, it may be useful to see what happens to students under democratic leadership in contrast with autocratic or laissez-faire leadership. This will make apparent why all teachers must work toward democratic leadership, even though no one teacher can hope to perfect it.

Under the authoritarian leader, members seek approval from the leader rather than from one another; there is marked rivalry for the leader's attention. When all rewards and punishments come from one omnipotent source, only the relationships with that person become important. Other members in the group are looked upon as being in the way, or as competitors, or as persons to whom one hopes punishment will be diverted. Under such leadership, member-member relationships are not likely to be constructive. . . .

An autocratic leader makes many, though not all, members fearful or angry. Since he may seem too powerful to rebel against, members of the group get relief for their pent-up feelings by attacking another member of the group. The autocratic leader fosters attacks on scapegoats and thus keeps tensions in the group directed away from himself.

Under a "democratic" leader, activity and responsibility are shared among the members. The leader behaves not like the Omnipotent One, but like one of the members of the group, though one who has special skills and knowledge. Failure as well as success is shared, and another's rewards are one's own. The leader's accepting attitude toward members fosters their respect for one another. They show a healthy balance between mutual dependence and independence.

A leader may . . . be too permissive. In such a group the child feels that anything goes; nothing is definite. The leader seems indifferent to the members and what they do. Members feel a strong need for leadership, and they may seek an autocrat. There may be rivalry among them

to organize the situation in some fashion or other. In many ways, members show their dissatisfaction with the anarchic situation.²

This statement makes clear the essential differences between autocratic, laissez-faire, and democratic leadership. But it does not cite the special circumstances of the school that surround even the most democratically oriented teacher:

The teacher has legal authority; the students are compelled to attend school.

The teacher is in the classroom because of special knowledge and skill; the students expect to learn.

The teacher must grade the students.

The teacher is older.

The teacher is a quasi parent.

All these characteristics of the teacher inhibit to a great extent the kind of group leadership that may emerge in voluntary groups. The school as a cultural institution is by tradition authoritarian; the students develop a deep expectation of "being run." This expectation of authoritarian procedures is a major problem for the democratically oriented teacher. In a voluntary group, of course, the expectation is different—the members, for the most part, expect to run themselves.

Realism, then, should guide the beginning teacher's efforts to develop democracy in the classroom. It is not easy, but it is not impossible. It may be helpful to sum up some of the characteristics of a democratic teacher-leader. The teacher who is democratic—

Gets a genuine satisfaction out of seeing the group do for itself something that the teacher may previously have done (e.g., lead a class discussion; set up rules for a field trip).

Considers all learning as a means of meeting individual and social needs.

Is willing to take a back seat as often as possible in order that students may learn how to exercise self-direction.

Is patient with the seeming slowness of the discussion and joint-planning approach.

² Henry S. Maas, "Understanding Group Processes," *Fostering Mental Health in Our Schools*, 1950 Yearbook, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (Washington, D. C.: National Education Association, 1950), pp. 289-290.

Is sensitive to student needs for security and guidance and therefore is not afraid of providing a firm touch as often as required.

Recognizes the variety of human personalities to be found in any classroom; does not penalize students for their economic, racial, or ethnic background, or for their level of ability.

Encourages creative thinking on the part of students; recognizes that any given unit of learning may be approached in an infinite number of ways.

Is able to respond objectively to student aggression; recognizes that the leader should not over-react to personal attacks by young people.

Many of these characteristics parallel those of the good teacher. But the characteristics listed above are crucial in defining the *democratic* teacher.

Difficulties in Democratic Teaching

Why is democratic teaching so difficult to achieve in the average high school? There are a number of significant reasons.

Institutional Traditions

As has already been mentioned, the school as an institution derives from an era when authoritarian relations were the rule in families, in governmental systems, in religious institutions. Teachers who seek more democratic ways sometimes find that a number of their colleagues strenuously oppose their new approach. Classrooms have always been teacher-dominated; it is the pattern most familiar to us. The students know exactly how to respond in such a situation, so teachers resist breaking the familiar routines.

Difficulties in Finding Significant Areas of Choice

Democratic education requires that young people be permitted to make significant decisions after group discussion, fact-finding, and evaluation. But because the traditional curriculum presents a course

of study, from which is derived a logical sequence of the subject matter, the teacher feels frustrated in finding significant choice situations. Students may make some decisions and choices regarding rules of conduct, but democratic learning is limited if this is all the choosing they are allowed to do. Selection of content and methods is highly important; therefore, some teachers may need considerable retraining in order to be able to present significant choices to students.

Inability of Students to Accept Freedom

Very often, when students have been fully conditioned to a repressive school environment, the least deviation produces chaos. And democracy cannot flourish in chaos. Frequently teachers, with the best will in the world, begin a class with democratic procedures without finding out first how capable the group is in self-direction and self-discipline. If order has always been imposed, students will not be able to discipline themselves without a very gradual induction.

In a class where very strict routines had always been followed—the read-recite-quiz sequence—a student teacher decided to introduce a small element of self-direction. He suggested that a bulletin board committee might take over the bulletin board, with contributions from class members, particularly those who had done poorly in the usual work. The idea, relatively simple though it was, took about half an hour of class time to convey. After the teacher had appointed the committee, including two top students, he was amazed to be bombarded constantly with numerous petty questions: What color shall we use? Can we use pins or thumb tacks? Who will put up the material? These students were so unskilled in self-direction that any teacher would have to move very slowly with them.

Too often, when a teacher does have such an experience, the conclusion reached is that the class just cannot have democracy in education. This is an unfortunate and unjustified conclusion.

Inability of Teachers to Share Control

Those who feel a need to be tyrants have no place in education. Of course, it is not only the would-be tyrant who finds it difficult to relax control. Teachers are often fearful about allowing students too

much freedom because "one never knows what the little demons will do next." This uncertainty is a genuine hazard; the adolescent is unpredictable—moody and stubborn one day, sunny and cooperative the next. The teacher who is sensitive to these forces, as well as the teacher who suspects that the ill-repressed primitive urges in adolescents may at any moment get the upper hand, often feels compelled to exercise a rigid and unrelaxed control over the classroom.

Teachers who do feel this way, however, are not taking account of the positive, civilized, socialized habits that young people have already acquired. In addition to emphasizing the latter, however, it is necessary to bring to teaching a real tolerance for the unexpected. Fear of emergencies and unusual events must not so paralyze us that we cannot be democratic in our teaching.

In an English class, during a period devoted to drama, two students were in front of the class reading a dramatic selection. It was a warm day—all the windows were wide open. As the selection reached its climax, one character was supposed to depart precipitately. He did. He dived out the nearest open window. The teacher, who had only been on the job two months, suddenly remembered that she had never noticed how far the window was from the ground (though it was on the first floor). However, she kept her presence of mind, and went on to lead a class discussion on the selection. A few moments later the student walked in the door and took his seat. After class, she suggested that there were better ways of making a sudden exit than diving out the window! Interestingly enough, no other student has ever tried to repeat that performance; the teacher's completely, calm reaction took some of the exhibitionistic appeal out of the episode, so that other students were not tempted to try the same thing.

Student Frustration and Aggression

Teachers who use democratic approaches to teaching are often surprised at the violent reaction of some one or two students, who, for no obvious reason, become genuinely upset. It must be remembered that democratic procedures put a great burden on the individual to be self-disciplined, to adhere to group-made standards, to share his own talents with the group. Many individuals in our culture find these disciplines very severe, especially if a harsh and rigid

parent, or, surprisingly enough, an overindulgent one, has prevented the development of independent self-control.

In a democratic situation, latent hostilities toward authority may come bursting forth; again, the teacher is likely to think that the fault lies in democratic teaching procedures rather than in the individual's own social adjustment. It is true that democratic teaching may permit more direct expression of aggression than repressive teaching. Aggression is also produced under repressive teaching, but it is usually displaced upon scapegoats, such as minority group members, other classmates, brothers and sisters. In a democratic situation the more permissive atmosphere allows the aggression to be directly focused on the teacher, who appears to be the source of frustration.

A teacher who wants to be democratic must be alert to signs of frustration. If too many props are taken away from students, and no adequate substitutes are provided, aggression may become widespread. For example, a teacher may suggest to students who have been used to working for grades that grades are not so important, that what is learned is very important. Eventually, he may bring the group around to accepting somewhat more realistic methods of evaluation; yet, in a short time, he may find the class agitated and rebellious, complaining that they don't know how they are doing in their work. The new methods sounded good intellectually, but they were not emotionally meaningful. If a group is not used to self-direction, a careful and slow approach is essential.

Undemocratic School Administration

Teachers who are themselves subjected to authoritarian treatment may come to believe that students should be treated in the same manner.

Observers had noted a very tense atmosphere in all the classrooms of a suburban high school. Students were reprimanded for merely slouching in their chairs. Whispering to anyone was a cardinal offense. Later, a faculty meeting was visited. There, the principal treated the faculty as the students were being treated. He shouted at them, shook his finger at them, and in general conveyed the impression that the faculty were to be ordered around. Interestingly enough, most of the faculty seemed to feel that their school was

much superior to all neighboring schools; that rigid discipline, limited textbook study, few extracurricular activities, and a "tough" marking system meant better education.

On the other hand, teachers themselves may reject a principal who tries to be democratic. "Why doesn't he tell us what he wants?" they say. Whether the attitudes originate with the teaching staff or with the administration, it is difficult to maintain democratic relations on one level without the active support of the other.³

Competition or Cooperation?

Because the spice of competition is present in most of the social and work situations in which people find themselves, we sometimes forget that the leaven of cooperation must also be present wherever people live and work together. In the democratic classroom, cooperation is regarded as a skill at least as important as competition. Furthermore, competition is encouraged between groups rather than exclusively among individuals. And the goals are of a different kind—competition is not for prizes or grades or special dispensations, but for higher achievement or more adequate solving of a group problem.

Teachers sometimes feel that the props have been pulled out from under if competitive situations are not all-important. They fear that students work only to get ahead of someone else, not because of any real interest in learning. The democratic classroom is viewed with alarm simply because cooperative enterprise accompanies individual competitive work, and teachers do not see how it can result in the same learnings. It is possible that democratic education will not produce the same learnings, but it will produce learnings just as significant. A democratic teacher may use competition when different groups have bulletin-board displays, and the class is asked to judge which group made the best display. Will the group that made the best one get an "A"? Where a pervasive grading system is in

³ Jean D. Grambs, "Do Teachers Want Democratic Administrators?" *Nation's Schools*, 46:40-41, November 1950.

operation, this may be necessary. A democratic teacher would strive to produce a situation where the recognition of what had been learned was all the reward desired; adult life awards no grades, only recognition.

The democratic classroom emphasizes cooperative skills because cooperation is crucial in the age of the hydrogen bomb and the intercontinental missile. Working with others is also essential in family life, in citizenship roles, in work relations. Too few students develop this skill in high school.

SUMMARY

A democratic society requires a democratic education, which in turn depends on the processes and attitudes prevailing in each classroom. Yet this *practice* of democracy is one of the hardest things for us to accomplish in education.

What are the earmarks of democratic education? For the student, they include a chance to learn responsibility through participation in directing significant areas of his own learning. This means that genuine choices are provided for him among the possible paths toward goals of importance to him and to society. The student, furthermore, feels a sense of freedom in his school experiences because there are reasonable rules and limits which he shares in setting. Finally, he feels that he as an individual is valued, because this participation, these choices, this freedom can only come about when the basic worth and significance of personality and individuality are recognized.

Because of long-standing expectations of how teachers should behave, these democratic human relations in the classroom are difficult to attain. It is far easier to use to the full the authority and power traditionally delegated to teachers. But, however difficult, it is clear that in this troubled time the effort to practice democracy must be made. It must be the continuing task of the teacher to appraise the growth of his students' ability to direct intelligently their own learning. The teacher is only democratic when he sees himself increasingly as a guide, not a dictator.

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How to Plan for Teaching and Learning

GOOD TEACHING can never be routine. It can never be organized like an assembly line in a factory. Neither the students nor the teacher can afford to do the same things day after day. For one thing, interest would be stifled, and motivation is essential to efficient learning. But, much more important, a standard pattern of instruction could not possibly take into account the individual differences among students. Nor could the same way of teaching day in and day out develop all the learnings that young people need in order to cope with this complex world.

The Teaching-Learning Process Is Planned

How Much Planning? And Why?

Variations in the amount of planning by competent teachers are as great as in any other component of teaching. Some teachers

do a great deal of planning; others, little or none. A wise beginner, however, takes care to do a thorough job of planning.

Good organization for learning does not just happen. It must be part of a well thought-out, long-range plan for activities and materials. It is unfortunately true that planning takes time. Getting away from the read-recite-test cycle requires time and thought on the part of the teacher. But if a teacher does a really thorough job of planning, he acquires a wealth of ideas for succeeding classes and can dip into this reserve for new ways of meeting the needs of new and different students.

Learning must be *whole* and *meaningful* if it is to be genuine and lasting. It springs from what we are and wish to become. It develops with continuity and sequence. It results in a new, whole, meaningful organization of knowledge, skills, and attitudes on the part of the learner. Good teaching recognizes these characteristics of genuine learning and sets its plans accordingly. Good teaching steers clear of trying to teach isolated, unrelated fragments.

Mrs. Saffer, who taught home economics, and Miss Blanding, the new tenth-grade social studies teacher, were the only ones in the lounge. Meeting like this during their free period, they had become friends during the first weeks of school.

"Really, you know, I'm at my wits' end," Elsa Blanding said. She sounded as though getting to that point had not been a happy journey.

Sarah Saffer looked at her kindly and asked what the trouble was.

"It's just this business of preparing for my classes every day," Elsa sighed. "It's getting me down. I try to make each lesson special. I try to bring in something new and different every single day, but somehow I know I'm not reaching my kids. They just aren't interested, really. I'm about out of ideas, except those in the text, and it's only October. Ugh!"

Sarah remembered her own first year of teaching, and the time she'd had learning to plan her work. After a while, she said, "You know, Elsa, it helps me to think that teaching is a little like making a dress. That sounds silly, doesn't it?"

"Not silly," Elsa said, "but I don't follow you."

Sarah continued, "Look at it this way. Making a dress, you think about who wants it: what size, style, and all that. You think about how it's going to be used; whether it's a plain house dress, a party frock, or what.

"And you'd never try to make a dress without a good pattern.

With a pattern, you know what you're doing. Selecting the right material is a big part of the job, too. After that, it's a matter of deciding what to start with first, and what to do next.

"When you finally hang the hem and turn it—well, that's the day. You've really made something!"

Sarah Saffer looked at the teaching-learning process as whole and meaningful, with a beginning, a middle, and an end. She saw the need to begin with a clear purpose suited to the needs of the learner. She knew that planning was essential, with step-by-step work geared to this planning. Like all of us, she took pleasure and pride in a sense of useful accomplishment. She saw learning as a whole garment, not as a patchwork, no matter how colorful the patches might be.

The Unit of Learning

There is an instructional procedure which helps to implement the idea of learning as a whole garment. This is the "unit" method of instruction. Teachers who plan their work in "units" do so on more than a day-to-day basis. Instead of cutting their classroom work into lesson-fragments, they use "units," which combine many interests and learnings. They aim at meaningful, broad outcomes reached through the unit. They see the unit as a sustained, well-planned experience, lasting days or weeks. They see themselves as guides in this experience, working with students to gain knowledge, understanding, and skills that will have meaning.

What Is a Unit?

The unit is a plan of instruction centered on a significant *area* of learning. It is a cooperative enterprise planned and carried out jointly by teachers and students. Instead of disconnected lessons, each day is devoted to exploration of the chosen area of learning. If it is a good unit, its plan will take into account differences among members of the class. It will have involved students in the planning from the beginning. To allow for their differences, a variety of activities will have been provided in the planning. Though the

unit often begins and is carried out in a regular subject, it frequently cuts across subject lines and makes use of related learning areas.

A unit can be all these things and yet be based on two distinctly different premises. On the one hand, the assumption may be that the goals of the high school can be reached through the presentation of logically arranged knowledge. In that case, the unit may center on a subject-matter topic: the halogens; the short story; the Civil War. This is sometimes called a *subject-matter unit*. On the other hand, the assumption may be that the goals of the high school can be reached through experiences enabling students to meet their needs—individual and social. In that case, the unit will center on social and personal problems. How can we prepare for good family living? How can we make democracy work better? This is sometimes called an *experience unit*.

The *experience unit* is the more difficult to conduct. It takes more skill and planning. It demands a wider range of activities and materials and requires greater elasticity in time allotment. The outcomes may not satisfy the school administration, which may be concerned primarily with uniform outcomes. This expectation may be reinforced both by school-wide testing programs and by the desires of other teachers. It may be difficult to obtain the same outcomes from experience units as from subject-matter units. Furthermore, as a beginning teacher, you may find it difficult to get an experience unit started in the short high school period, and even more difficult to maintain continuity. You may find fellow teachers complaining because your students get involved in the unit at the expense of other assignments.

On the other hand, you will find positive rewards in teaching problem-centered or experience units if you can manage to do so. Through them, you tap resources of vitality, interest, and creative motivation in students who feel that they are working with the real stuff of life. You may also find that the difference in classroom implementation between subject-matter and experience units need not be so sharply drawn. Subject-matter units can be planned to take account of student and social needs, can have subject-matter goals oriented to these needs, can utilize materials and activities to meet both the short-term subject-matter expectations and the long-

term goals of the high school, and can include a broad evaluation program. If you find that you must teach subject-matter units a good part of the time, you may well direct your teaching toward this kind of learning.

Here is how Mr. Robinson, at Elmwood High School, developed a unit that combined subject matter and experience. This unit took part of the class's time for a whole semester. Mr. Robinson's eleventh-grade English-Social Studies class became interested in the idea of developing a "current history of the world," based on clippings from the press and produced as a group project. The class decided that it could perform a real service for the school and its library by bringing together over a whole semester the main news stories in several major fields of interest and giving them continuity between the covers of a scrapbook.

The class decided on ten major areas of news interest, beginning with the local community and extending through international and world affairs. These ten areas were to be chapters in their "current history of the world." After the chapter headings were settled, ten three-member permanent committees were set up to work on the news material for each chapter. Students chose those committees in whose work they were particularly interested. Each committee had two reporters and a chairman, designated as an associate editor.

Leadership needs were discussed by the class, and certain leadership roles were defined. Individuals to fill these roles were not elected until qualifications for each job had been carefully discussed. The position of editor-in-chief was filled by a girl whom the class selected as being best suited to carry out the responsibilities they themselves had outlined. A managing editor was chosen who seemed to the class to be capable of organizing and managing the project's details. An art editor was chosen because of his recognized competence in graphic work.

The ten associate editors from the chapter staffs, working with the top editors, developed a schedule of production that gave everyone in the class clear responsibilities. A definite goal—that of producing a scrapbook history of the world in sufficiently finished form so that it would be accepted by the school librarian for addition to the library—gave the whole class a common direction. The production schedule called for each chapter staff of three to produce one page for the scrapbook each week, based on the top news stories of the previous week. Production of this page for any one chapter involved the three-person group in a number of learning experiences. Each week, the three students were responsible for bringing in what they considered the most significant clippings in their chapter area. They decided which of these clippings were important enough to include on the page for that week. In addition, they were responsible for developing a headline keynoting the week's news. Work-

ing on a given chapter, they also agreed to develop a one-hundred word summary of news events each week.

The managing editor checked carefully to see that clippings actually were brought in and that headlines were transmitted to a lettering committee so that they would be ready for final page preparation later in the week. He also collected the one-hundred word summaries and, with the editor-in-chief, corrected this copy before transmittal to a typing committee. The typing committee saw to it that the summaries were typed and ready for application to the finished pages by the end of the week. Brief meetings were held almost every day at some time during the two-hour core period. Once each week a "news roundup" was held, at which delegates from all ten chapter staffs took part in a symposium based on the previous week's events. At the end of the week the editors and their associates bore the responsibility of bringing together the finished pages and accumulating them under appropriate chapter headings for eventual binding.

Each member of the class shared in a purposeful common undertaking. Students were exposed to the rich and varied picture of contemporary life to be found in the press and were encouraged to be selective and discriminating in the use of the newspaper. Such skills as reading, writing, spelling, and punctuation were brought into focus in a significant context. The composition of the class was heterogeneous and the capacities of its members covered a wide range. The project provided the top editors and their associates with a job that tested their abilities. Through art work, through preparation of covers for the three volumes that were finally produced, through typing, through lettering, and even through on the spot news photography, some of the students who were less adept verbally did jobs of which they and the class were proud. When the semester came to an end, a delegation from the class proudly bore the three completed volumes into the library and presented them to an astonished librarian. Somehow she managed to find room for this bulky masterpiece on her crowded shelves. They remain there today.¹

Stages in Building a Unit

Stage One: Preparing and Initiating the Unit

When you undertake a unit of instruction for the first time, you should rough out a complete, if tentative, plan. We have said

¹ For a more complete description of this approach see Franklin Patterson, "Newspapers, A Project, and An Astonished Librarian," *The Clearing House*, May 1951, Vol. 25, pp. 543-545.

that a good unit is planned cooperatively by teachers and students. So it is. But you will best be able to maintain orderly direction in your instruction if you see some distinct goals, some definite activities, some specific sources of materials, some well-defined evaluation measures that you *may* use. You should base your tentative choices on data you have collected about student differences and on your best estimate of what experiences will meet their developmental needs. Moreover, you should expect to modify your rough plans in accordance with your students' suggestions. But it is unwise to venture far without preplanning.

Good units do not just happen. If you have done your work well, you will have an accurate profile of your class. You will know its heterogeneity. You will have considered what learning activities and materials are feasible and available. Nothing is quite so devastating to class morale as a stimulating introduction that is followed two days later by a terse announcement that the unit has to be abandoned because of a lack of resources.

But suppose you have calculated your risks carefully, what then? A unit topic should not be abruptly announced or forced upon a class. At the same time, you will find it a waste to make elaborate efforts to "sell" your students on the idea that they have "discovered" a unit that was inevitable in the curriculum anyway. In terms of capturing student interest and purpose, your best approach is probably the direct one.

Mr. Manley fumbled through the personnel data cards that he had made for his class. These were ninth graders. It was spring—beautiful weather—ideal for baseball. The class met right after lunch. They came perspiring and exhausted from the noon-hour activities. They'd go to sleep unless he managed to involve them in something they thought important. Or else some of those girls would just get the giggles.

He stopped his aimless toying with the cards. Most of these kids lived in Southtown—been having some trouble out there at the drive-ins—never had been enough recreational facilities out there—might start a discussion around that last drive-in fracas. Ask them to list some of the grievances—pretty sure the recreation problem would come out—need something, though, to suggest a way to tackle this thing—might be a good article they could read together. Better check the library.

Mr. Manley strode out of the room and into the corridor. There he met Mr. Hill, the principal.

"Hello! Say, been thinking about turning my ninth-grade gang loose on recreational facilities in Southtown. Think it's all right? Don't want your office stormed by unhappy taxpayers."

The principal thought a minute. "As a matter of fact," he said, "the Lions were going to look into the problem anyhow. Maybe your crew could work with them. I'll call Hal Woolf." They went into the office together. Mr. Hill called Hal Woolf on the phone, and he was all for the plan.

"Going to show a movie—Leaders for Leisure—at the next luncheon period. Bring Manley along."

The movie was good. Mr. Manley brought it back to the class. He brought them smack into the recreation problem in Southtown. He started a brisk discussion, then showed the movie. Out of it came plans for a community survey in collaboration with the Lions. They were off!

Just how sound do you think Mr. Manley's approach was? What strengths did it have? What weaknesses? How would you go about preparing and initiating a unit more adequately?

The initiating stage of a unit includes certain key steps on which the unit's ultimate effectiveness and success depend:

1. Preliminary realistic diagnosis by the teacher of (a) curriculum requirements and (b) student interests, capacities, needs, and developmental tasks.

2. Tentative selection by the teacher of possible significant problems or areas of learning geared to the preliminary diagnosis.

3. Tentative preplanning by the teacher to clarify for himself the ways in which possible problems and areas may be approached most effectively.

4. Open, direct, and stimulating discussion with the class designed to involve them in further diagnosis and choice of a problem or area for further study in planning.

5. Sufficient preliminary exploration with the class to ensure that all students understand the why and what of the unit enterprise finally chosen.

6. Use of special materials, films, and activities (such as field trips) that will both clarify understanding of the unit problem and focus interest upon it.

7. Development of teacher-student plans adequate for the effective completion of the unit.

The last point is worth especial attention. Once the problem has been chosen, careful joint planning of the scope and sequence of study is essential. The scope is usually indicated by dividing the problem into principal subquestions. Beginning teachers often have trouble at this stage because the limits of the problem are not clearly defined. Usually both teacher and students are eager to get into the problem if the first steps in beginning the unit have been stimulating. They see no point in mulling over the statement of key questions, it seems like a waste of time. However, unless the energies of the group are mobilized by a clear plan, they will be expended in a hundred directions and never bring the unit to a satisfactory culmination. The sequence of study is equally important. For example, it must be perfectly clear how the data necessary to answer subquestions or solve subproblems will be collected and who will do the job. Much of this work will be done in groups. Guidance of group activities, and the activities themselves, require skill.

Stage Two: Developing the Unit

It is somewhat artificial to separate *initiation* from *development* of the unit. Actually, the second stage evolves naturally from the first. Although class participation is greatest during the second stage, the teacher continues to play a vital leadership role.

For example, the teacher performs an important function in helping the class define the *objectives* of its action and study. Just what are we really after? What will we have when the unit is completed? This goal-setting actually begins, of course, during the initiation of the unit, when plans are being agreed on. But the closer the students come to action in the unit, the more important it is that their goals be concrete and clear. By asking the right questions, by guiding discussion, by helping the class verbalize and criticize its goals, the teacher plays a significant role.

The teacher plays an equally important role in helping the group decide which *activities* will best help it attain its objectives. Committee chairmen may need suggestions now and then about

what activities and materials will gain the group ends. Will it be discussion? Or a field trip? Are individual assignments called for? Does his group need to see a motion picture, or listen to recordings of interviews, or cull the newspapers and periodicals? As these questions arise, the chairmen should have access to the teacher's advice and resource file. The teacher will want to check regularly with the group chairmen as individuals and as a kind of executive committee. Sometimes the teacher will want to call for a general class discussion to review common problems and ensure that the goals are still clear.

Development of the unit gives the teacher unusual and complex opportunities to provide student assignments that will *maximize* individual development. Because the unit is almost inevitably a complex undertaking, which requires a variety of activities to carry it forward, student capacities may be challenged at many levels and in many areas. It is part of the teacher's function to guide the assignment of students to various activities according to both their ability to contribute and their ability to grow. Here the teacher makes decisions not so much on the basis of who will do a specific job most quickly or best, but on the basis of who will learn and grow the most.

As the work of the class on the unit progresses, the teacher continues to act as a guide, both for individual students and for their working groups. A class working on a unit is comparable to a busy laboratory or a workshop. Students work in small groups or as individuals, move about to use room facilities, to confer with others, to consult files or the classroom library. The teacher's voice is not the only one to be heard in the room. Conversation and discussion are necessary parts of work-going-forward. The teacher moves among the students, visiting individuals and groups, offering assistance, listening, observing, guiding. He, too, is a learner in the unit and may be frank to say so.

The unit moves forward in time to its agreed date of completion. Individuals and groups in the classroom eventually feel their deadlines close at hand. These are times agreed to in planning, and progress toward them has been checked in the class plan book or unit log.

The second stage reaches completion with the students' presenting of their findings to the class. Some may utilize a panel presenta-

tion. Other members of the class may delegate a single spokesman to explain their findings to the whole group. Dramatizations, displays, recorded presentations, and a variety of other techniques may be used. Bit by bit, as the unit nears its close, the class finds itself rounding up data and insights it did not have before. If the unit has gone well, everyone in the class, including the teacher, will feel that he has shared in an important, meaningful venture.

Stage Three: Evaluating the Unit

Whether a feeling of accomplishment is really warranted, what strengths and weaknesses the unit had, how it might have been improved and made more effective, are all concerns of the teacher and the class in the culminating stage of the unit. This is to say that the main business of the third stage in a unit of learning is *evaluation*.

Certainly the emphasis in the unit should be on the quality of the process rather than on the end product. We do not evaluate a unit solely on the basis of a beautifully illustrated or dramatic report. The processes of learning leadership and followership, developing good group attitudes and skills, fostering problem-solving abilities, and encouraging student self-direction also deserve major consideration. If some of the gathered facts slip away in the ensuing years while these essential processes remain, the efforts of the unit will have been justified. A good culmination includes such evaluation by both teacher and students. The success or failure of a unit is not measured solely by a pencil-and-paper test or some comparable device.

Evaluation, in the sense in which the word is used here, is a stock-taking by all concerned, aimed at assessing the findings of the study, the procedures that were used by the class, and the future implications of what has been learned.

Crucial Factors in Your Planning

Students and Teachers Plan Together

Much of what has been said in this chapter about planning has emphasized what the teacher must do *before* entering the classroom.

But to achieve optimum learning, students must be encouraged, as we have seen in the case of unit construction, to take an active role in reshaping plans for instruction. In other words, the teacher's plan should be tentative only; the final plan for action should be conceived jointly by students and teacher.

The planning will revolve around such questions as these: What are the divisions of *this* problem? How shall we go about finding out how people feel on this subject? What rules do we need in order to go on that trip we proposed? These are questions of classroom procedure and student conduct as well as of choice of subject matter. Such planning is fundamental to democratic teaching. Democracy requires planning, not by one person, but by all concerned.

The good teacher has a strong conviction that such planning, if successfully carried out, achieves a better quality of classroom control and motivation for learning than other approaches do. He assumes that each class is unique, and that therefore each class will plan a different approach to learning. The teacher's role, then, is to help the class see what the choices are and to analyze them; to see the consequences of the choices; and then to outline a plan.

A history teacher decided to start the semester's work with a topic of interest to his students. But he was not sure just what did interest them. He arranged with the two local papers to have sufficient copies of both papers in class when school opened so that each student could have one to read. The first two days' assignments were to read the paper carefully and then come to class with a suggestion about some topic of such importance that class time should be spent on learning more about it.

Numerous suggestions were made. These were written on slips of paper, and, while a committee started tabulating them, another committee helped pass out the textbooks for the course. There were three different texts to choose from, so the students had to leaf through them and decide which one they found most appealing. (The three books were on different reading levels, and the teacher sought to help those who needed fast or slow books to choose properly.)

Finally, the committee on current events reported that most of the class felt that recent happenings on a state level prior to a coming special election were of most concern. A discussion was then conducted by the teacher about this special election. From here, plans were made to get additional information. It was found that many students did not know about the machinery of state elections.

Plans were made to read in the texts about how state government operates. . . .

In this example of *planning*, the teacher deliberately set up a situation in which a choice would have to be made. He knew that every contemporary event has its historical roots, so he saw no reason not to let the students choose the beginning topic. With this guidance, they could easily see what more needed to be learned. Planning of what content to study—within the limits set by the course and by the instructor—involved the students in an important activity. The subject matter came alive. After all, if you choose to study Egyptians rather than Phoenicians or Babylonians, you are probably going to be somewhat more interested in this topic than in a formal assignment. Choice on the part of students helps provide positive motivation.

Teachers have found that students often have a greater sense of participation in the conduct and direction of their own learning if they are allowed to help judge their own achievements. This acts as a very important incentive to following through on what the group has agreed upon. It is interesting to note also that students are likely to establish more exacting standards and often more difficult assignments for themselves than you would as their teacher. Moreover, it is encouraging to see how concerned they are to make decisions fair to all.

One word of caution concerning the use of student-teacher planning: avoid overdoing it. Constant insistence on student choice can be just as frustrating as its complete denial. Time should be set aside for student-teacher planning shortly after the initiation of a new unit. There should be short planning sessions for the day as the work progresses. Evaluative sessions are important in keeping standards of work and conduct at an acceptable level, but the balance of class time should be devoted to problem discussion, study and research, and individual and small-group work.

Planning sessions should be stimulating and well paced. That is, the students should feel that this opportunity to choose and evaluate is real and that choices and judgments should be considered seriously and carefully. The teacher must bring a genuine enthusiasm to the planning sessions, showing his own eagerness to learn and evaluate progress along with his students. He must see exciting

opportunities for learning even in his students' most mundane and naive suggestions.

Can planning be applied in such logically organized classes as algebra, geometry, chemistry, and physics? The answer is yes. Although some teachers do not develop large, problem-centered units in these subjects, there is still ample room for student-teacher planning. Such questions as, How much time do we need for study in class?, Should we do lab work in pairs, in groups, or individually?, How much credit should be discounted on homework if papers are messy and untidy?, are best answered by students and teacher working together and are pertinent in any and all classrooms. Although valuable class time must, of course, be spent on such planning, the teacher will find that much less time will be spent later in pushing reluctant students and in checking up on undone assignments.

Planning for Motivation

Planning with students is closely related to planning for their motivation. Class work, of course, is useless unless it leads to efficient learning. An indispensable factor in the learning process is *motivation*. It is the extra *push* that impels us toward the hard work of learning. Primarily, this push comes from inside us. Real motivation may be said to operate when a thirsty man sees a tall glass of cool water. The teacher must try, therefore, to establish the process of learning as the goal that will satisfy the real and abiding thirst of students.

Some teachers refer to motivation as a special matter. Actually, it embraces all that makes for good teaching. Beginning teachers are sometimes appalled and frightened at the apparent apathy and lack of interest among adolescents. But this need not be. Several means of motivating learning have been implied in our earlier discussion of individual differences.

RECOGNIZING STUDENT NEEDS

Here the teacher draws upon all he knows about adolescents in general and those in his class in particular. He identifies those needs relevant to *his* course, content, and experience. For example, the biology teacher knows that adolescents need to understand and

accept bodily changes. Therefore, if biology content gives students a chance to understand their own physical equipment better, they will be motivated to learn.

HELPING STUDENTS BECOME AWARE OF THEIR NEEDS

But often the things we need, we do not *know* we need! Thus it is with adolescents. They have no *need* to learn about lenses and refraction of light in physics class, but a skilled teacher, by showing them all kinds of lenses—in eyeglasses, microscopes, car headlights, binoculars—can excite their curiosity and create a “need to find out” why and how light can be bent. Creating such an awareness in a psychologically sound manner means that the teacher has a medium for widening the experience field of the student. If a teacher wishes to interest students in bettering their oral skills, he may provide motivation by recording several job interviews and then asking the class to judge who would get the job—and why. Thus he provides a springboard for concentrated practice in self-improvement.

CONVEYING ENTHUSIASM FOR LEARNING

Enthusiasm is contagious. Some teachers kill their own subject because they forget to share with students their own interest in it. Others, by their own enthusiasm, convey a sense of excitement and stimulation to their students.

The wise teacher does much to convey and capture enthusiasm by utilizing units focused on genuine concerns of the students. The problem-centered unit is, in a sense, its own motivation. It is the teacher's task to see to it that the problem is of deep concern. Adolescents readily respond to the real article and just as readily reject a substitute that is only a pretense at a “problem.” One reliable test of what is a good problem in this sense is the speed with which the students comprehend it. If the teacher has to do all the work of building enthusiasm over the “exciting” material, then it can be assumed that the problem is *not* really important to the adolescent.

SETTING GOALS IMPORTANT TO STUDENTS

Too often the real thing a student works for is a grade. Actually, of course, this is motivation too—some students can and will work

very hard to get a good grade. But the result is low-level learning. The student actually is not concerned with *what* he is learning, or even *how*, but only with a status label. Good motivation establishes goals that are in themselves important: to be able to read better, or fix simple electrical circuits, or to appreciate the culture of a foreign people, or to have greater skill in taking dictation. To endure, learning must be based on more than a grade.

RELATING THE GOAL TO THE STUDENT'S RANGE OF ABILITIES

Setting a goal too difficult or too easy to achieve will destroy a good job of arousing interest. Aspiration levels can be made commensurate with student abilities through variations in assignments, as we will see. Students enjoy working hard at tasks from which they can gain personal satisfaction through a sense of being actually *able* to perform.

A task remains challenging so long as the student is fairly certain that he can perform it and perform it with some pride in his accomplishment. Success must taste good, must not be too cheaply won, and must leave important resources for further learning.

Good motivation is positive and is based on learning that makes sense to the learner. It is *not* negative. Too often, the motivation used by a teacher takes one of the following forms:

If you don't do this well, you will have ten additional problems!

We'll have a test tomorrow if you waste this study period!

We can't stay on this topic all semester! You'd better start studying harder or you'll flunk the exam.

Since you did so badly on that last test, we'll have to spend more time on this material.

Such phrases, and their underlying negative approach to learning, do *not* provide good motivation. Whenever the teacher expresses this attitude he builds student antipathy to learning. From then on, it is a dull and dreary struggle for both teacher and student to plough through the drab desert of history, or chemistry, or French, or bookkeeping, or what you will.

Genuine teaching and learning is an exciting and worth-while experience for all concerned. In that experience, the only really practical motivation, in the long run, is *positive*.

The Assignment Is Crucial In Planning, Too

It was near the end of the period in a junior class at Ashford Union High. Bored students were slowly closing their books, mentally calculating exactly how many more minutes were left to the hour. The minute hand jerked on with a slow, dull click. Miss Jonas always waited until the last possible moment to make the assignment for the next day. Often the crucial words were spoken as the bell shrilled out, effectively drowning her voice. Then students anxiously and irritably demanded, "What pages were we supposed to read?"

Today she seemed particularly labored in giving the assignment. "Now I want you all to read Chapter 3 in your text. That is about forty pages. You should be able to do that at home in about an hour. Be ready to answer questions on the chapter, and perhaps we'll have a short quiz if you aren't prepared well enough. I'm going to check in my record book and call on those of you who haven't been doing much in class lately."

This time Miss Jonas beat the bell. She finished her unpleasant remarks just as the period ended. The students straggled out, complaining about what they had just heard. Clearly there were few students in this class who looked forward to returning to Miss Jonas' class the next day.

Does this description seem overdrawn? Or is it a typical episode in hundreds of high school classrooms? Let us look for a moment at a teacher who is performing the assignment function at a somewhat higher level:

It was near the end of the period in a junior class at Ashford High. A student was in front of the room, answering questions about a report he had made on a visit to the telephone company. He had brought back some advice from the personnel manager on what high school students should do to prepare for work in his company. Questions were being fired at him right and left. He was having difficulty remembering all of them. Just then Miss Murphy interrupted: "Bill, I think our time is about up. That was a splendid report and there are many more questions to be asked. Since we haven't time now to answer the questions, suppose each student jots down tonight three or four really important questions he would like answered about the visit Bill made. We'll ask Bill to answer them the day after tomorrow."

Miss Murphy then turned to the board and wrote: "Assignment for Period 2, Wednesday: 3 or 4 questions on the telephone company visit." "Also," she continued, "There are some books here and in the library on how to prepare for a job. After we hear from Fred

and Mary tomorrow on their visit to the cannery, it would be helpful to have some summaries of these books for those who could not make trips. Suppose each of you takes one article or book and prepares it for Thursday. Anyone else interested can see me." This was written on the board, with the names and the topic. There still remained a few moments of class. Students gathered their books: John, Bob, and Harry came to the shelf and discussed the books they would choose. The teacher briefly chatted with them and made an appointment to talk with them during the first moments of class the next day.

This is an example of a different approach to the assignment. The teacher has capitalized on what is occurring in the class at the moment and within the framework of an on-going activity. Specific students are given special work to do. No threats are made; instead, the assignment is so stated that it follows naturally out of the discussion.

Current practices in assigning out-of-school work leave much to be desired:

The meager, vague, unanalyzed, wholly inadequate type of assignment predominates in the secondary school, practically to the exclusion of all other forms. One investigator reports that more than four-fifths of the procedures—in the social studies of all places—involved nothing more than page assignments to a single text book! . . . Despite fifty years of attack by competent critics armed with unlimited, valid evidence, there persists the wholly unexplained assignment aimed only at "covering the text." It would be difficult to devise an educational practice so grossly ineffective, so certainly calculated to interfere with learning, as a page assignment to a single text followed by a formal, verbal quiz. Yet, this is the practice used by the great majority of secondary school teachers.²

Participation by students in developing assignments is encouraged by only a minority of teachers. Assignments developed in accordance with the varying interests, abilities, and needs of the students are also still too rare.

What are the hallmarks of a *good* assignment? Here are some:

The assignment motivates substantial units of work. One teacher divided the number of pages in the textbook by the number of teaching days, and found that if the students read five pages every

² William H. Burton, "Implications for Organization of Instruction and Instructional Adjuncts," in *Learning and Instruction*, Forty-ninth Yearbook, Part I, National Society for the Study of Education (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1950), p. 227.

night they would finish the book by the end of the year. This daily assignment had absolutely no relationship to the unit.

Spending half a period on a significant assignment is far better practice than five minutes every day on piecemeal, fragmentary assignments.

The assignment is developed through discussion between teacher and student. Extensive discussion with the class about the assignment will help the students understand its meaning. The teacher should also provide room for student modification of and addition to the assignment. Perhaps the teacher has given too short or too long a time for completion. Perhaps an additional topic to be covered has been omitted. An assignment that represents a joint enterprise is a sounder investment of time and energy than one made by the teacher alone.

The assignment arises from an important problem requiring additional data for its solution. To expect students to learn very much from trivial tasks is to expect the impossible. The student needs to see a genuine relationship between the assignment he is expected to complete and some significant purpose.

POOR: List the five main reasons brushing teeth is important.

See pages 25-35 in your text.

BETTER: Arrange an interview with a dentist or dental hygienist.

Ask for the following information: Does diet affect tooth decay? Does brushing teeth help prevent decay? What does fluorine treatment do? Are there any similar discoveries that we should know about? Read one of the following articles and tell whether you agree or disagree, or explain what difference the conclusions made in what you do every day regarding diet and care of teeth.

The assignment includes alternatives to meet the varying needs and interests and abilities of the class. The usual assignment assumes one level of need and ability in the class. Everyone has to learn the same thing and the same amount. Yet we know this will not work. The assignment should provide a number of pathways to learning, not just one. These may *complement* or *supplement* or *parallel* each other.

A Complementary Assignment: Choose one of the following three areas and prepare a summary to be presented to the class:

1. The weather problems in our locality.
2. How the weather bureau operates in this area.
3. How weather changed the course of history.

(Selected references and activities suggested)

(Due date: One week hence)

A Supplementary Assignment: Students may review the material pertaining to the contributions of immigrant groups in general to American culture.

(Selected references listed)

Or may choose to trace the story of one immigrant group in our locality or one they are particularly interested in.

Maps may be drawn showing: (1) Historical patterns of migrations or (2) Major settlements of various ethnic groups today in the nation or in our state.

A Parallel Assignment: Following is a list of the books and the chapters that cover the material on electricity. This we need to study in order to continue with the experiment on A. C. and D. C. current. You may read one chapter. The books are listed in order of difficulty: the simplest at the top of the list and the most advanced and detailed at the bottom. Sign up for the book you want.

The assignment is clear and concise. A vague problem is worse than no problem at all. A brief statement of what is to be done, who is to do it, and when it is to be completed should be placed on the board at the end of every assignment period. Often a teacher will find it useful to allocate either bulletin board or blackboard space to each class, on which all assignments can be posted and remain during the time they are being completed. Students can check themselves off as each assignment is finished by a simple method of posting a list of all class members with their assignments and due dates, and providing a place for checking when the teacher has received the completed work. As each assignment is finished, the sheets can be removed and placed in the teacher's file, where he can also record the evaluation of each student's work. Duplicating such class lists at the beginning of the semester will facilitate this kind of routine.

Flexibility exists for special assignments according to varying class experiences. The example of Miss Murphy showed a teacher capitalizing on class interest for an immediate assignment. However, we cannot always count on some event in class that can be con-

veniently turned into an assignment. Therefore, the teacher will have to plan a number of possible assignments several days in advance, always being alert, however, to a superior alternative arising out of the daily activity. Using class events rather than preplanned assignments usually means tapping greater student motivation. It is often useful to have several possible assignments in mind and then use the one that seems to reflect student interest at the moment.

The assignment has variety. The old textbook assignment routine was deadly in its monotony. It assumed that there was only one way to learn the material. In a mathematics class, for example, the assignment in the text could be varied by problems in real life, problems from other books, readings in the lives of mathematicians.

The assignment includes planning with the class about what constitutes good performance. Once students have helped set assignments, they will be eager to discuss what expectations are reasonable in carrying out an assignment. Contrary to common expectation, students do not set standards too low. Unless carefully advised, they may set them too high.

The assignment does not overload students. Some teachers derive great satisfaction from boasting about the fifty-page research papers their sophomores turn in. The value of engaging in enterprises to impress fellow teachers may be questioned, to say the least.

The assignment is made when it does not interfere with major out-of-school activities. Teachers only invite hostility by scheduling assignments that interfere with student participation in the big game, the big dance, the big play. It is just good sense to make allowances at times such as these.

The assignment helps students develop adequate study habits. By scheduling study periods in class so that students can get started on the assignment, the teacher can observe whether they have the skill to attack the problem and can provide aid to those who need it. Supervised study is a vital adjunct to adequate assignment procedures. It is especially important to those students whose home conditions make study difficult, if not impossible.

What do we do with the textbook if these assignment principles are followed? Clearly, the textbook is here regarded as providing (1) a quick overview of the problem, (2) a handy reference guide, and (3) a useful minimum assignment for students who cannot be stimu-

lated to explore other ways of learning. The place of the textbook in relation to other learning resources is discussed further in our chapter on materials (Chapter 7).

A frequently used device in making assignments is to list questions that are to be answered upon the completion of the research section of a lesson or unit. These questions, by pointing up things to look for, may be used to guide reading. Common practice, however, often assigns a number of questions at the end of a textbook chapter. Such textbook questions may seek information that is trivial. The student will be asked to discuss problems that are not problems to him, not now or ever, or to concentrate on details that even the teacher barely remembers from semester to semester. Whenever the question device is employed, the teacher should ask himself, "Is the answer to this question worth remembering?"

The time for formal education is short, and the complexity of ideas and concepts and knowledge that we hope to introduce to young people is overwhelming. Assignments should seek out those most basic, significant, enduring major concerns, instead of wasting precious time and destroying interest by excessive digging for detail.

Planning for the Day's Work

The unit of learning, at its best, requires of the teacher long-range planning for resources and materials; but, as we have seen, significant day-to-day planning is shared with student groups. What of the role of planning when instruction is not organized on the basis of units, when it is organized instead by more conventional areas of subject matter? Here the teacher's responsibility for day-by-day planning is much more direct, and he will need lesson plans. This is not to say that in his classes he cannot engage in cooperative planning or group work or joint evaluation. But it does mean that the range of choices is less extensive, because the preliminary screening has been done by the teacher. This kind of lesson plan, aimed primarily at the presentation of subject matter, will be discussed in terms of: (1) lesson purposes; (2) activities and materials; (3) assignments; (4) evaluation.

Lesson Purposes

The plan should take cognizance of the long-term goals of the high school in order to place the immediate objectives in perspective. Daily objectives must be realistically modest. Both teachers and students tend to overestimate what can be accomplished in a fifty-minute period. The teacher should help students choose objectives according to their individual needs and abilities. Students themselves are usually not aware of how different they are.

It is good technique to help students phrase their purposes in the form of questions, because responsibility for action may be implied in a question. Questions should stress concrete problems rather than abstractions. Problems can be made concrete if conceived in terms of everyday applications. This is especially important when planning a single day's lesson.

Activities and Materials

Of course there can be no hard-and-fast rules about how many activities and what materials are required for a high school period. But it is certain that there should be some variety of both within the hour. The class should rarely discuss all period or listen to the teacher all period, or even meet in groups all period. However, orderly transition from one activity to another requires explicit forethought on the part of both students and teachers. Much time, energy, and motivation can be lost if transitions are allowed merely to happen.

Because not everyone in the class comes equipped to learn the same thing in the same way, a variety of instructional materials must also be planned. But again, it is imperative to know when and how each material is to be distributed and used. It is obvious that the teacher should have some familiarity with the materials before they are used. Beginners sometimes go through embarrassing moments when trying to utilize motion pictures, maps, or chapters of texts that they have not previously seen.

Some kind of time budget will be necessary. Nothing is so awkward as a slice of idle time—idle because nothing has been planned.

The beginning teacher should always have a number of alternatives in his plan. He will regularly have need of these extras. He invites disaster if he trusts to his ability to extemporize.

The Assignment

As the work progresses, regular restatements of key purposes are needed to discover whether the class still knows its direction. If assignments are used to carry the day's work forward, they should make clear what to do, how to do it, why to do it. They must be specific: who is to do what, what difficulties are involved, when it is to be done. Assignments must be made at the right time—on the basis of inadequacies in discussion, group work, problem-solving—when they will lead to further learning. Assignments are never successful when they are mechanically conceived. Because the assignment is crucial to carrying out the plan for learning, and because it is one of the chief areas of conflict between student and teacher, we have discussed it at length earlier in this chapter. What was said about assignments in relation to unit planning applies in substantial part to the daily planning of lessons as well.

Evaluation

Evaluation of the day's work does not imply merely a five-minute quiz or grading the assignment or conducting an oral question-and-answer period. Each of these may have its place. But the effective teacher will take equal note of how well the student worked in his group, what pictures he collected for the bulletin board display, the quality of the questions he asked. There are useful practical ways of observing behavior in the classroom, and they belong in a sound scheme of evaluation.

What a Well-Planned Unit Looks Like

Whatever we may say about daily lesson plans, it remains true that the most effective teachers do their planning in larger segments

or units. If this is true, we need to ask ourselves why so many teachers have not used unit procedures in their daily work.

Studies indicate that many teachers fear unit planning will involve much more work for them than conventional methods. There is evidence that this fear has grown primarily out of a lack of understanding of unit planning and of unit methods of operation. Apparently, lack of understanding of, and skill in, planning and conducting units of learning has been overcome neither in pre-service nor in in-service training of teachers. Too many teachers of teachers apparently have relied on merely *telling* their students about unit theory and practice. Not enough emphasis has been placed on concrete illustrations and demonstrations of unit procedure. In this chapter, we have sought to present the basic concept of unit planning in a practical way, to show what steps should be taken, and to use anecdotes for illustration.

It seems important also to provide you with an example of a particular unit of learning, so that you may see how one teacher applied the concept and the steps we have outlined in our discussion of unit planning. Here is a unit developed for teaching in the Chicago public schools. The unit is deliberately chosen from a rather specialized area. How would you plan such an experience unit for your own teaching field?

HOME ECONOMICS

DRESSING MYSELF ON A BUDGET

Initiating Stage

Considering the selection of the unit:

1. Appropriate seasonal wardrobe a basic need.
2. Its place in subject field.
3. Its relation to family income.

Displaying fashion magazines on racks.

Posting advertisements on bulletin boards.

Viewing style show in the auditorium.

Discussing need for a spring wardrobe.

Raising the problem of how to obtain new clothes within the family income.

Showing film strip, such as "Managing the Family Income," "What Shall I Wear?"

Deciding what the title of the unit enterprise should be.

Developing Stage

1. Cooperative planning of objectives by teacher and pupils:
 - To increase one's . . . economic competence.
 - To take responsibility in improving family living.
 - To improve one's ability to use a budget.
 - To develop skill in selecting and buying clothes.
 - To develop one's creative abilities.
 - To grow in self-confidence.
2. Planning the way the class will conduct the unit enterprise:
 - Tracing the historical development of clothing.
 - Comparing clothing allotments of present-day Americans with those of pioneers and people of other lands.
 - Deciding on essential activities or jobs.
 - Selecting pupil personnel for activities (individual, small-group, or class)
3. Carrying out the activities:
 - Determining wardrobe needs of teen-age girls.
 - Comparing clothing needs of students at our school with those of girls of same age in other countries.
 - Taking an inventory of what is on hand.
 - Listing one's spring wardrobe needs.
 - Examining budgets.
 - Apportioning fair amount of family's clothing costs to high school girl.
 - Contrasting wardrobe that may be bought on a slim budget with one bought on an average budget.
 - Studying and interpreting advertisements.
 - Acquiring knowledge of appropriate attire for various occasions.
 - Determining criteria for selection of various articles of wearing apparel.
 - Studying commercial patterns.
 - Acquiring skills for clothing construction.
 - Having pupil secretary keep a log of various class activities.
 - Comparing characteristics of various fibers.
 - Discovering how textiles are made.
 - Drawing on school resources to facilitate work.
 - Relating class work to department stores in community.
 - Demonstrating use of aids in caring for clothes.
 - Inspecting labels.
 - Building a vocabulary.
 - Using automatic washer, dryer, and mangle.
 - Removing stains.

Repairing clothing.

Planning trips to city's clothing stores.

Entering budget expenditures.

Listening to tips given by salespeople on buying.

Using information from educational and research agencies in planning purchases.

Discussing need for government control of standards.

Determining "novelty" element in pricing merchandise.

Investigating and discussing the effect of scarcity and abundance of raw materials.

Deciding whether or not to purchase articles out of season.

4. Integration with other learning areas:

Art

Dressing according to one's type (in line, color, fabric, etc.),

Using color intelligently.

Judging effectiveness of high style or classic style.

Science

Testing fibers.

Testing color-fastness.

Language Arts

Writing an article on "Selecting Spring Wardrobes."

Dramatizing a customer-salesman situation.

Arithmetic

Considering income levels for planning sample budgets.

Planning and using own budget.

Revising budget in light of experience or of a change in economic condition.

Home Room

Enlisting cooperation of home-room teacher in planning school wardrobe needs.

Home

Planning budget with parents.

Seeking advice and aid of parents in selecting clothes.

Helping younger members of family to select clothes.

Reading fashion columns in newspapers and magazines.

Listening to radio and television fashion programs.

Community

Taking self-made garments to tailor for finishing touches.

Attending commercial style shows.

Investigating vocational opportunities in clothing field.

Going window shopping.

- Comparing prices on identical garments in different stores.
- Touring clothing sections of a large department store.
- Taking advantage of legitimate sales.
- Joining classes in sewing, millinery, and making of accessories.
- Observing work processes in clothing industry.
- Visiting wholesale clothing establishments.
- Visiting museums to observe costumes of famous women in Chicago's history and clothing of other times.
- Investigating and discussing various methods of buying: door-to-door, mail order, store, telephone.
- Appreciating the interdependence of individuals and groups in general.
- Noting that fundamental principles of honesty apply to dealings with large businesses as well as small.
- Acquiring a code of shopping ethics.

5. Acquiring a vocabulary of important words in the unit

accessories	fashion designer	separates
apparel	fashion salon	sportswear
budget	fiber	standards
circular knit	gauge	synthetic fibers
classical style	high style	swatches
clothes budget	installment	tailored
costumes	inventory	tebized
denier	labels	testing laboratories
dressmaker suit	mannequin	textile
ensemble	sanforized	texture
fabric	seam proof	wardrobe
		worsted

6. Materials

- Using basic and auxiliary textbooks on the "List of Instruction Materials," Chicago Board of Education.
- Viewing audio-visual aids from the Division of Visual Education and other sources.
- Studying charts and exhibits appropriate to the unit from manufacturers, pattern companies, and other commercial concerns.
- Consulting pamphlets from various commercial sources, as listed in "Free and Inexpensive Curriculum Materials."
- Reading magazines such as *Seventeen*, *Charm*, *Practical Home Economics*, *Consumer Reports*, *Vogue*, *Harpers Bazaar*.
- Using pattern books from *Simplicity*, *Advance*, *McCalls*, *Butterick*, *Vogue*, and others.
- Examining various types of clothing materials, including the new synthetic fibers.

Culminating Stage

Exhibiting completed wardrobe.

Judging finished garments of students by standards set up in class.

Comparing self-made garments with ready-made garments of like style and materials.

Evaluating knowledge and skills through results on tests and score sheets.

Using unit learnings in school, home, and community through:

Practicing habitual clothing care.

Buying within one's income.

Assisting other members of family with care and selection of clothing.

Practicing courtesy and shopping ethics.

Planning ahead for seasonal wardrobes.

Growing in ability to spend clothing money wisely.³

SUMMARY

In this chapter we have indicated the crucial role of planning in the teaching-learning process. We have seen that adequate planning make the difference between effective instruction and humdrum attendance at school. We have examined the unit of learning as a concept of great usefulness in planning your own classroom work with boys and girls. This chapter has indicated the three basic stages in planning and carrying out the unit of learning. We have seen how and why modern education stresses the significant values of student-teacher planning. We have looked at practical, positive ways of building motivation into our learning plans. We have considered the assignment as a practical tool in vital education, and for realistic reasons we have considered the essentials of effective lesson plans for a single day. We have rounded things out by offering as an illustration a specialized unit of learning developed in one of the large school systems of the United States. Consistently, this chapter has avoided giving the impression that classroom teaching and learning can be blueprinted by masterminds. Without planning on the job in each classroom, there can be no effectiveness in teaching; it is the teacher's business, and that of the students, to see that creative planning takes place.

³ *The Unit of Learning in the Chicago Public Schools*, Curriculum Brochure No. 6 (Chicago, Ill.: Board of Education, 1954), pp. 51-55.

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Providing Materials for Learning

IN A SENSE, many high school teachers are “prisoners of the word.” They rely heavily, if not exclusively, on *verbalism* as a tool of instruction. As students themselves, many teachers have weathered a long educational process in which *words* and *numbers*—spoken, written, read—were very nearly the only tools of instruction. Their own academic success was won largely through skill in the manipulation of words and numbers. Ultimately, their understanding of ideas, their appreciation of beauty, their competence and confidence, are channeled through the single groove of *abstract symbols*. These symbols—words, numbers, musical notation—have become almost synonymous with *education*.

And as such teachers were taught, so they themselves strive to teach. In their classes, abstract symbols are the primary tool of instruction. Words, numbers, notations are used to introduce problems and concepts, understandings and skills. Student achievement is measured in terms of performance with such symbols. Some students, it is true, can adapt and achieve admirably within this kind of instruc-

tional program. Others can achieve passably. Others respond little, if at all, to instruction that restricts its means and ends to this tool. Common sense and research both indicate that all students can gain more through an instructional program that casts a wider net, a program in which a *variety* of tools is used.

The truly effective high school teacher today is not restricted in his conception of the proper materials and tools of instruction. Abstract symbols, in whatever field of study or problem area, remain of the highest order of importance. But the effective teacher is not a prisoner of abstract symbols. As a skilled practitioner, he exercises choice, selecting from an increasingly rich array of materials, devices, and techniques those that are best for any teaching-learning task.

Today's effective high school teacher has a *sensitivity* to the capacities, needs, and developmental tasks of his students, which helps him choose the most appropriate tools of instruction. He has an *awareness* of what learning tools and materials are available for selection. More and more, the effective high school teacher today has *skill* of a practical kind in using a variety of instructional tools beyond the printed, spoken, or written word. He is flexible in adjusting materials of instruction to the needs of the learner and the dynamic, changing, unpredictable opportunities of the classroom. Most of all, he displays *creativity* in his selection and use of tools and materials. He brings imagination to the teaching-learning process. He finds vivid materials in simple things-at-hand. He encourages students to develop their own materials. Whenever he can, he finds, begs, or borrows good ideas for making learning real and permanent.

Materials for Learning

We Learn Through Living

Although psychological theories of learning vary, there is remarkable agreement that learning is "reflected in a change in behavior as the result of experience."¹ Such a concept, however, does us very

¹ Ernest A. Haggard, "Learning: A Process of Change," *Educational Leadership*, Vol. 13, No. 3:150, December 1955.

little good by itself. We must identify the *conditions* under which learning occurs as well as the *means* to desirable learning. Before we discuss materials and tools of instruction, then, we should look clearly at the nature of these conditions and means.

We know, for example, that learning is never passive. We know, too, that a person's behavior is not determined solely by outside forces. Our behavior and learning are deeply affected by inner forces, by our "frame of reference," motivations, goals, self-concept.

We know also that genuine learning is more than a conditioned response. In the best sense, learning is a process through which the individual enhances his independence and maturity. Through such learning the person becomes better able to behave intelligently and responsibly.

In all candor, too, we must admit that much of what we learn and remember, apparently with ease and permanence, is gathered *outside of traditional formal instruction*. Boys and girls, outside of school, constantly learn through living. "Instructing" them are a myriad experiences, ranging from family and peer interaction to television, comic books, magazine articles, and an infinite variety of other stimuli.

Thus we would say, first, that the total person is the learner; that learning is a process in which both outer forces (environment, situation) and inner forces (motivation, needs, ability) play dynamic, interacting parts. Second, we would say that the old view of the learner as an empty receptacle to be filled by the teacher is erroneous; that learning at its best enhances the individual's capacity for independent, mature behavior. Third, we would note that the individual learns in and through his total life setting; he learns what he lives.

If these things are generally true, they help us toward some practical insights about materials and tools for learning. It becomes clear, for example, that any "experience" through which we guide a student must take into account both the inner and the outer forces of his life situation if it is to result in desirably changed behavior. The same is true of materials for learning. Both experiences and materials will be most effective if they involve the learner as an increasingly independent, mature participant in the learning process. And, as school people, we will do well to note that in his total life

setting the individual learns with ease and permanence through a variety of experiences and stimuli. If there are so many different paths to learning, we may become better teachers if we try some of them.

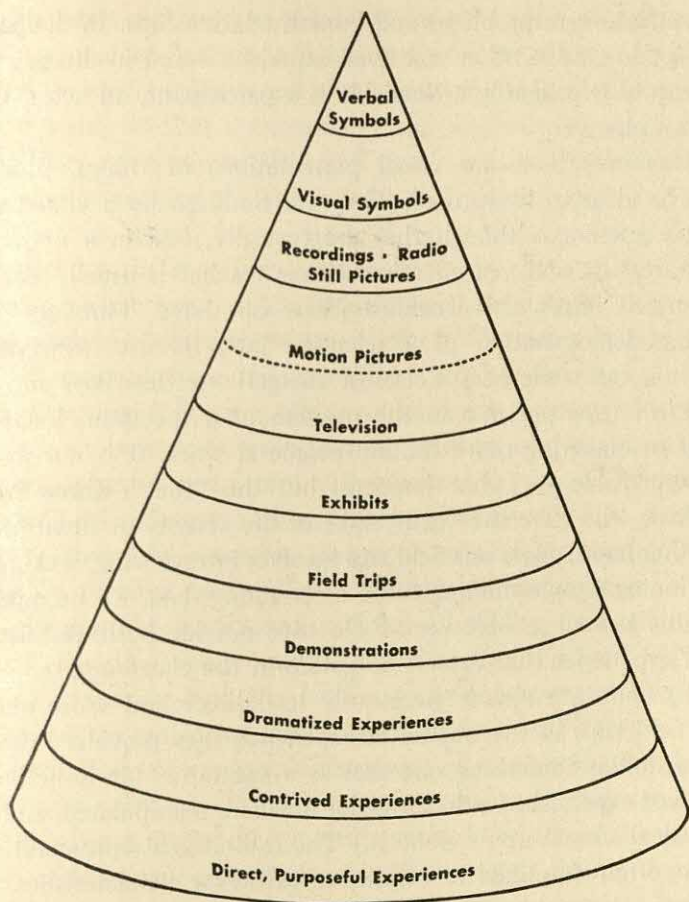
The "Cone of Experience"

The "Cone of Experience" (see facing page) is used by Edgar Dale, one of the leaders in the field of learning materials, to illustrate graphically the stages between direct experience and pure abstraction.² The section at the base of the cone represents the most immediate, concrete aspect of living and learning: direct, purposeful experiences. As you proceed up the cone, section by section, the experiences become progressively more abstract and less direct. At the apex of the cone, most abstract, is the section including verbal symbols. Dale emphasizes that we should not view the bands of the cone as rigid, inflexible divisions. Nor does he wish us to see the various bands as being arranged in order of difficulty or importance. They do, however, help us to see experiences of living and learning in an order of increasing abstractness as one moves away from direct, immediate reality. All these levels of experience, with the materials that accompany them, can play a significant role in effective teaching and learning.

Direct, purposeful experience is the real stuff of life. In it, we participate directly, with responsibility for outcomes. Dale calls this the "unabridged version of life itself," and says that it is "the bedrock of all education."

At the first level of abstraction, *contrived experiences* are replicas or simulations of reality. Often it is too difficult to study reality directly. Perhaps the reality in question is too large, or too small, or too dangerous to approach easily and directly in the classroom. Training programs in military and commercial aviation utilize contrived experiences on an extensive scale. Before crew members are expected to take off and fly in a new, complex, and multimillion-

² Edgar Dale, *Audio-Visual Methods in Teaching*, revised edition (New York: The Dryden Press, Inc., 1954), pp. 42-56. For a vivid, comprehensive, and thoroughly practical treatment of the field of audio-visual materials, the student will find Professor Dale's entire book of great value.



dollar aircraft, they may be "checked out" for many hours under conditions of "simulated flight" in an exact mock-up, or replica, of the craft. On a simpler scale, a boy or girl studying a globe map of the world is having a contrived experience which as yet would be impossible in actuality.

Dramatized experiences are, in a sense, a kind of contrived experience. Participation in a dramatized experience can help us capture some of the feeling of a reality that is no longer at hand; we can relive parts of the past, sensing in a tableau or pageant something of the human meaning of such events as the first Thanksgiving, or Lee's surrender at Appomattox. It is also possible for us to "role-play"

important human problems and human relationships. In dramatized participation, as in other contrived experiences and in direct reality, the learner is primarily a *doer*. He is a participant, an actor, rather than an observer.

Demonstrations are visual presentations of things, processes, facts, or ideas to be learned. They are traditionally a vital part of science teaching, although they are typically used in a number of other areas as well. An effective science teacher is usually aware of how much impact his demonstrations can have. Through an intriguing demonstration of a scientific fact, intense, concentrated attention can come over a class of energetic, restless boys and girls.

Field trips put one in the position of a spectator, looking at things or observing processes and people at work. It is not we who are responsible for what happens, but the "they" whom we are observing who have the "real" stake in the activity or situation. On the other hand, when our field trip involves interviewing, seeking out, questioning people, finding facts, ascertaining data, we become participants as well as observers. Field trips provide both abstract and direct experience that cannot be gotten in the classroom.

Exhibits are almost necessarily less direct and more abstract than field trips in the quality of experience they provide. Primarily, the exhibit is something one sees as a spectator. (It is unlike the contrived experience in that it is not handled, manipulated, and used the way the mock-up or globe is.) The exhibit is a representation of reality, often simplified to emphasize particular characteristics, processes, or relationships. Color, design, lighting, and symbols all help determine how much impact the exhibit will have. In viewing ready-made exhibits, prepared by a manufacturer, museum, or some other source, we are pure spectators. On the other hand, sometimes we have a share in helping to "make" an exhibit. Then we are involved in both doing and seeing, and the exhibit is an experience in which we have participated more directly. Exhibits may include a wide variety of materials, depending on what is needed and what is available. A catalog of likely materials would be very large indeed. It would include scale models, photographs, charts, posters, paintings, drawings, physical objects, and a host of other items. Exhibits may be two- or three-dimensional, presented on a flat wall surface or constructed in mobile form.

Television and motion pictures bring us sensory concreteness, a feeling of realism, and a unique clarity. They possess an almost hypnotic power to command our attention. Motion pictures can abstract reality so that it becomes clearer and more comprehensible for us. They can compress time and space, so that in a thirty-minute film about the making of aluminum we may range through the history of the process, travel from Alaska to Africa to view the industrial production of the metal, and return to many parts of the United States to see the metal fabricated and in various kinds of practical use. In relation to the film, we are primarily spectators. We are some distance removed from the *actuality* of seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, tasting. We are watching a highly edited reality or a fiction of reality; we participate in the experience vicariously, imaginatively. But how powerful and useful this can be! History and the people who made it can become intensely alive through the film. Scientific reactions, industrial processes, geographical concepts, can achieve a lasting clarity when presented well through motion pictures.

Television, of course, can perform all of these functions, too. Indeed, television makes heavy use of films. In addition, television provides something that the motion picture cannot do. Television can present the real event immediately, as it actually happens. Here is an immediacy of contact, a directness of communication, whose values and impact we are just beginning to absorb. Through television, the subject matter of life itself can be at hand: political nominating conventions, important scientific events, Senate hearings, crucial happenings in the news—all of these and more are brought directly to the viewer.

Still pictures, radio, and recordings are all less direct and more abstract than the experiences and materials we have mentioned so far. As Dale points out, these are "one sense" materials. The still picture, whether it is viewed directly or projected on a screen, remains a still picture; it lacks motion and sound. We *see* it. Similarly, a radio broadcast or recording depends primarily on one sense for its impact. These materials, either giving us representations of reality or a portion of reality itself, can be powerful aids to learning. In them, however, certain elements or dimensions have been abstracted, and we are a little farther away from direct, purposeful experience.

Visual symbols, including flat maps, diagrams, charts, and other

materials and devices, involve us in a different kind of communication from those we have discussed. With visual symbols, we move to a fully abstract representation of experience and reality. (In other stages, reality has either been experienced directly or realistically reproduced in various ways. Visual symbols are a kind of shorthand for reality.) We use a dollar sign to symbolize money, a divided pie to show distribution of income, a line on a graph to show changes over time, bars on a chart to show differences in proportion, symbols on a map to show direction.

Verbal or quantitative symbols are at the apex of the cone of experience, because of all our experiences these are the most abstract. What is a word or a number? A verbal or quantitative symbol, whether word, letter, or number, is a designation for an idea or a thing. It is a designation that bears no physical resemblance to that for which it stands. The word *dog* neither looks, nor smells, nor sounds like the animal for which it stands. The appearance of the two symbolic formulas H_2O and H_2SO_4 little suggests that the symbols stand for two quite different things! We have to know what the symbols *stand for*. This is the essence of the verbal or numerical symbol: It is completely abstracted from reality, except for the *meaning* we learn it to have. This meaning has been arrived at by general acceptance and understanding. *Esroh* (*horse* spelled backwards) would have been fully as useful as a symbol for the animal in question had society happened to decide so. Although verbal and numerical symbols have this quality of absolute abstraction from reality, this does not mean that they are the property of great minds only. As soon as we learn to understand words and then to speak, we are dealing with verbal symbols. Verbal symbols are the common property of all listening and speaking human beings. They vary in complexity, of course, much as reality and our understanding of it do. Verbal symbols have a unique flexibility and an almost infinite capacity for different kinds of use. For example, verbal symbols are used with every other experience and material included in the various sections of the cone. They are woven into everything we think and do and learn.

A few words of caution about the cone of experience concept: it does *not* classify learning materials and experiences according to

their importance. Neither does it intend to suggest that the various kinds of experience come in sequence, or are possible to separate from one another in functioning use. It emphatically does not suggest that teaching and learning properly always begin with the most concrete stage (direct, purposeful experience) and move to the most abstract stage (verbal symbols) in a kind of mechanical sequence. Nor does it suggest that one sense is superior in learning to another.

What the cone of experience emphasizes is that learning situations and materials differ in their level of abstraction. No single kind of experience and material will prove equally effective with all students. The cone is not a layer-cake affair, but is simply a brief, vivid way of illustrating the many tools learning may use. Each part of the cone has unique functional value at appropriate times, in appropriate situations, with specific students. It is the teacher's challenge to help the learner by providing materials and an environment in which, as needed, he may *use* symbols, *use* vicarious experience, and *use* direct, purposeful reality to master his learning tasks.

Variety in Learning Experiences and Materials

We have emphasized the need for *variety* in learning materials and experiences. But how can the teacher plan to include variety in addition to everything else he is supposed to do? Actually, variety in learning experiences follows very naturally when planning starts with student interest and experience. The reason for this is that student interests and experiences are themselves different at different times.

For example, a teacher of social problems might plan a discussion on developing worth-while leisure interests (in order to lead into a study of the problem of leisure and recreation in an industrial civilization). He might talk over with students the degree of their satisfaction with a recent vacation. Several important points would probably arise: First, recreation costs money; second, there are not enough recreational facilities in our town; third, our parents won't let us do the things we want to do in our leisure time. On the basis of these points, a teacher could foresee such *variety* of activities as these:

Use of film or film strip for background on community recreation.

Community study to see how much recreation costs.

Use of encyclopedia on recreation and related topics.

Library research to see if anything has been written about this subject.

Interviews with local recreation commission to see what is available in the community.

Panel discussion of the findings from the activities above.

Quiz on how much you know about recreation in your town.

Individual oral reports on findings.

Essay examination on problem topics in area of recreation.

Poster and bulletin board displays on desirable recreational activities.

Written reports on specific phase of subject of survey.

Individual scrapbooks of advertisements, newspaper clippings, and so on, on recreation and health.

Diary by student of own recreation habits.

These are some of the many experiences that can come out of a single unit of work when instruction starts with immediate student interests and activities. The unit might follow some such plan as this:

MONDAY: Class discussion during which problem is presented through stimulating questions by teacher. Analysis of problem shows a number of areas of interest. Class is divided into study groups. Groups elect chairman and discuss and delegate responsibilities.

TUESDAY: Small-group study on various areas of interest. Some use materials in the room; some go to library. Whole class reconvenes. Class hears preliminary reports from groups as basis for planning.

WEDNESDAY: Supervised study: groups plan work, individuals study in library to get information and prepare for community survey. Homework is either continued study in text or library sources, or interviews.

THURSDAY: Preliminary panel report on group findings after brief group meetings at beginning of period. One group has arranged an exhibit and bulletin board display.

FRIDAY: Quiz section: class discussion of results. Follow-up discussion by class on activity to date and plans for a field trip Saturday morning.

Thus, a week's work in this unit presents students with a variety of learning situations each day and over the whole week. Because each day presents some lively participation activity without neglecting time for quiet study and thought, and because many different kinds of materials are used, students are likely to learn lasting lessons in this class.

Variety is all very well and good, some teachers may say, but how can we have this "variety" when the subject matter is strictly limited—for example, in algebra, or typing, or foreign languages? Variety is not only possible in these fields, but highly necessary. Here are some illustrations:

AN ALGEBRA CLASS

MONDAY: The class was excitedly discussing the last football game as the teacher entered the room. He had planned to start the unit on ratio, and found this a good place to begin: "How would you like to make a model football field for this room? We could discuss some of the good and bad plays." The boys agreed enthusiastically. From this came a discussion of how to make a scale drawing, which led into the problem of ratio.

TUESDAY: Since not all the students were eager to do the football-field problem, and since no more than five or six at the most were needed, the teacher expanded the discussion the next day to other areas in which ratio was important. Out of this discussion came several more interest groups. One group decided to show the proportional size of the world according to the time taken by different means of transportation to circle the globe, from historical periods to modern times. Two groups of girls decided to see whether they could set up a series of recipes serving a large number of people, and then submit them to the cafeteria management in order to improve the bill of fare.

WEDNESDAY: The mathematics of ratio was explained and discussed. Examples from the text were worked out. Homework on ratio was assigned and started in class.

THURSDAY: Groups met on their projects. The football-field group went down to get the school blueprints to find out what the dimensions were. The girls worked on recipe books brought from home. The world-size group was in the library doing research.

FRIDAY: An architect was invited by the teacher to show how ratio enters into his work; he brought along a number of house drawings and industrial plans. The groups agreed to complete their work by the following Wednesday. A quiz on ratio was planned for

Tuesday, and Monday was to be a class review of ratio problems in the homework.

A TYPING CLASS

MONDAY: A businessman was brought in to explain the importance of appearance, accurate spelling and punctuation, and careful phrasing in a business letter.

TUESDAY: Several business letters were diagrammed on the blackboard, and spacing problems were discussed.

WEDNESDAY: The class did a sample letter together while the teacher gave individual assistance.

THURSDAY: The students undertook business-letter assignments individually from the typing manual.

FRIDAY: The class selected a business firm to which they might write for free literature, catalogs, a mail-order purchase. They typed the letters, and then exchanged, criticized, and mailed them.

A FOREIGN-LANGUAGE CLASS

MONDAY: The students used practice records on which a native speaker spoke the phrases. Students tape recorded their own use of the phrases and then compared the playback with the native speaker's pronunciation and accent.

TUESDAY: Simple songs were sung. (If the teacher is self-conscious about his singing, he uses a student leader or a phonograph record to lead the singing.) The class viewed a wonderful French film, *Crin Blanc*, about a boy and his horse.

WEDNESDAY: Displays were fashioned from travel agency materials (or from organizations such as the French Information Service, with offices in principal cities) and from materials collected from families in the community.

THURSDAY: Slides of the country where the language is spoken were viewed. A film strip was also used, showing cities and cathedrals.

FRIDAY: A restaurant scene was improvised. Small groups took turns going through: greeting the head waiter, being seated at the table, ordering from the menu, discussing the table arrangement and the food, paying the bill.

Variety is not only important in any single class, but year after year different approaches to the same subject matter are needed. The first reason is that each class is different. No two eleventh-grade groups in United States history, for example, can be quite the same. Each has a different assortment of boys and girls, with different home and school problems and interests. The second reason for such a change in approach is its effect on the personality of the teacher.

To do the same things five periods a day for ten months, year after year, is bound to have a deadening effect on his spark and interest. For the sake of sheer self-preservation as a person, the teacher should seek new approaches to his subject matter.

These, then, are the reasons classrooms must have variety in experiences and materials:

Higher interest is maintained.

Mental and physical hygiene are improved.

More differences in maturation, experience, needs, and abilities are taken into account.

The students and the world in which they live are different from year to year.

Teacher morale is better.

We will discuss instructional materials in three principal groups.

Audio-visual materials

Newspapers, periodicals, and free materials

Textbooks

These may be thought of in terms of the "cone of experience" concept proposed by Dale. Materials from these three categories can play a vital part in learning experiences at various levels of concreteness and abstraction.

Why Use Audio-Visual Materials?

Promising approaches to better learning have been developed in the audio-visual movement. This movement has emphasized the importance of using the full range of instructional materials now available: motion pictures, television, recordings, radio, film strips, slides, models, charts, and pictures.

The effectiveness of these materials of instruction was well demonstrated in the vast laboratory of World War II. There, where efficiency was at a premium, clear and consistent learning economies were effected in almost every kind of teaching from developing social attitudes to building physical skills. These gains held for almost every kind of learner from the very slow to the very fast. In high school classrooms, these same advantages obtain. A few illustrations will serve to demonstrate how audio-visual materials help to meet

basic differences in learners and to provide important means of motivation.

AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIALS HELP MEET DIFFERENCES IN NEEDS AND INTERESTS

One of our basic needs is to have good personal-social relations with others. Essential to satisfaction of this need is, of course, direct experience with other persons. But experience must lead to an understanding of how good relations are furthered. For some students, keys to understanding can be wrought out of printed materials that interpret their direct experience. For others, sights, sounds, and feeling tones reproduced in a motion picture help fix the necessary concepts. Still others comprehend problems in human relationships best through dramatic participation.

Mr. Bertoth's class was finishing a unit on "Getting Along with Others." Each member of the class had brought in one of his problems in establishing good relationships with people. The problems were grouped under five subtopics:

- How to get along with parents.*
- How to get along with brothers and sisters.*
- How to get along with other adults.*
- How to get along with members of the opposite sex.*
- How to get along on a job.*

Five groups of students had agreed to work on the subtopics. Joe Agransky's group took a tape recorder and collected interviews with parents. The day the group presented the recording, three parents came along to be available for the discussion. Mary Roder's group delved into the psychology books and periodicals. Out of these they selected the most common problems of brothers and sisters. Then they wrote a playlet around these persistent troubles, based on their own experiences. The motion picture "Dating Do's and Don'ts" was used by Hank Schmitt's committee to start a rousing discussion. Jennie Marsh persuaded one of the local radio stations to lend her group a transcription of a program they had produced, called "Meet the Boss." Harry Penn's group had not reported yet.

Audio-visual materials can also help meet differences in interests. Let us take one kind of interest: the current social scene. We all know that democracy places large faith in the ability of common people to get the facts about their problems and to make sound judgments on the basis of these facts. Today, young and old alike

are bombarded with a thousand sources of information. Of course, no one is born with the ability to distinguish a source that is clear and objective from one that is foggy and prejudiced. So all have to learn.

There are two basic problems in this learning: (1) to know the range of sources, and (2) to use and evaluate this range in understanding the social scene. The first problem involves helping high school youth realize that they are relying on too few sources for all their opinions on current events. Some may depend on a single television commentator. Others may trust one newspaper, and still others may speak out of one periodical. The second problem concerns those students who have a narrow interest only—in sports or music or the social whirl or, indeed, politics. Other important matters covered by our superb media of communication simply get no attention from these students.

Audio-visual materials can help with both these problems. Good teachers show the boy who relies on the newspaper what he can learn from the motion picture and the girl who depends on television what she can gain from the periodical. The student who feels drama only in football may sense climax and denouement in history when he sees expert re-enactment in a motion picture.

AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIALS HELP MEET DIFFERENCES IN ABILITIES

Some of our students have a special talent for handling the abstract, for dealing with verbal and quantitative symbols. Our high school instruction, as we noted at the beginning of this chapter, has depended heavily on this kind of ability. But some of our students do not have a marked verbal or quantitative potential. In such cases we have been prone to say that they were without any aptitude. Actually, they may have other important gifts—aptitude for the mechanical or for the artistic, or aptitude in dealing with people. Unless the full range of instructional materials is used, the full range of aptitudes cannot be developed. Those whose ability lags in *writing* a good paragraph about technological development in the early twentieth century may still be far ahead in *building* replicas of 1910 automobiles. Those who lack skill in figuring the costs of producing *Our Town* may have the ability to play George

or Emily with insight and feeling. Of course, everyone needs at least a minimum of ability to express himself in writing and to solve arithmetical problems. However, it is certainly overlooking an asset to learning if existing aptitudes are not used to develop other needed abilities.

Mr. Maybee's ninth-grade mathematics class was studying the topic of measurement. First they tried out some problems in measurement of their classroom, then the school. Mr. Maybee showed them a simple way of finding the distance from one corner to another of the building without cutting through the walls. Then they studied how homes were planned to conserve space. George Holt's father was a builder. So George brought in blueprints of some new houses being built. With Ozzie and Ben, George built a scale model from one of the plans. George's father said he'd like to use it in his sales office at the tract. It was really a fine model, even though none of the three boys had ever been very good at mathematics.

Audio-visual materials may also be used effectively in developing the ability of students to handle quantitative and verbal symbols. Although the potential of some students in reading, writing, and arithmetic may be low, we have, of course, no license to neglect these necessary abilities in high school. But frequently we do. Often we say that the skills should have been developed in the elementary schools, or that if the students cannot do high school work, they should not be in high school. But if we are honest, we know that neither statement will bear close examination.

We know that our society needs these abilities developed at least to the point where its citizens can meet their everyday problems of making a living, raising a family, taking part in their government. There is no present likelihood that these basic abilities will be developed for all the children of all the people without high school training. Films, flash-cards, recordings, and many other aids can be useful in helping high school boys and girls achieve a more adequate command of the "fundamentals."

AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIALS HELP MEET DIFFERENCES IN EXPERIENCE

Sometimes the boy who reads badly is suffering from *malnutrition of experience*. He cannot bring experience to bear on many symbols he sees because, even in high school, he simply has not had

it. He must have this deficiency remedied before he can develop skill. If he cannot visit the scene for which the symbols stand, he can at least see and hear and feel something of their reality in a good motion picture. Sometimes the girl who flounders in arithmetic has never connected the multiplication tables with cooking or clothes or cars. She needs to work out this relationship in matters important to her. She may be helped by a problem of dress design, progressing from the first sketches to the exact measurements of the pattern. As she pursues her goal of converting an idea for an attractive dress into a pattern from which material can be cut, accurate arithmetical skill will become quite important to her.

Bert Hogan never had liked history. History teachers always wanted you to read a lot. Bert just couldn't keep up. Now here they were studying the Westward Movement. Old Pisenki seemed to get pretty steamed up about it. Always talking about "pioneer spirit" and "winning order out of the West." Bert just couldn't see it. The words stayed flat and empty on the page of his book. And this movie they were going to see today sounded about as dull as the book. Due Process of Law Denied. What a title! Bert slouched a little lower. But wait a minute! That's Henry Fonda. And there's Dana Andrews. This is a pretty fair horse opera at that.

When the last lines about "the conscience of mankind" lingered in the taut silence of the room, Bert Hogan felt life in history for the first time. Did this kind of thing happen very often? Could a guy get hung then even if they didn't really prove he'd done anything? Hey, could they see that thing again?

Youth brings great differences in experience to the high school. There are, for example, students who have traveled throughout the United States and students who have never been ten miles from home. The history of our country may be dead on the pages of a book unless the color and grandeur of its "purple mountain's majesty" are more than words in a patriotic song. Slides, film strips, and pictures can bring this beauty close.

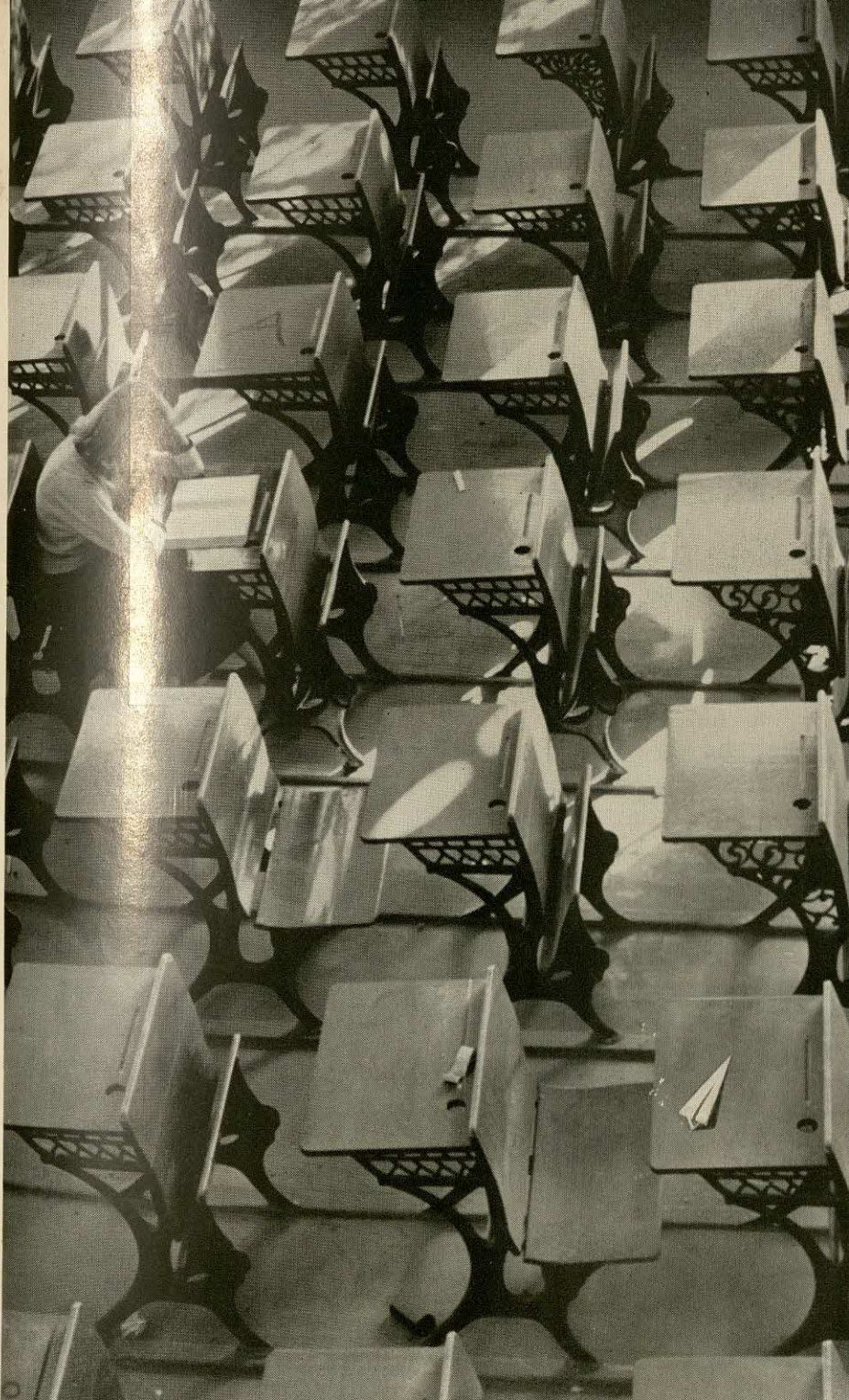
AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIALS HELP MEET DIFFERENCES IN MATURATION

In adolescence the sharpest differences in maturation are usually noticed in sexual development. We have said that in many ninth grades there are boys and girls and men and women sitting side by side. Often these obvious differences give students private concern.

Part of the competence of a teacher comes from his ability to grasp the significance of the clues that every teaching situation provides. The teacher is only one factor in a complex interaction; to be effective he must be completely aware of the other parts of the whole.

Here is a good example of a tableau whose significance will be disclosed only by sympathetic understanding. What is this girl doing at the tag end of a school day? What happened during the day; what was "taught" and what "learned"?

As you try to reconstruct the story behind this picture you should be able to find plenty of clues in the classroom. What clues can you find and how would you interpret them? How would you teach in this classroom? *[Photo courtesy Eastman Kodak Co., Kodak High School Photo Contest]*





Where is the teacher?

Once upon a time the teacher never stirred from his chair at the front of the room and the students seldom if ever stirred from their precisely aligned desks. If, by some miracle, a phonograph or slide projector made its way into the classroom, everyone accepted the fact that only the teacher would go near it. If a frog was to be dissected, the teacher would do the dissecting and the students would dutifully "take notes." After all, equipment was expensive; frogs were apt to spill on the floor; and students were not to be trusted.

We have changed since then. Now we know that the more responsibility we give to youngsters, the more responsible they become. Now we know that there is no substitute for actual participation: the group around the phonograph is listening to the record, not day-dreaming; the boys cutting up the frog are learning about a frog's insides, not "messaging about."

The teachers are present in these two classrooms. They are there listening, helping, guiding. Their presence is felt, encouraging their students to take responsibility for learning. [Photos courtesy Standard Oil Co., N. J. (top) and U. S. Office of Education (bottom)]

Too often the community has not allowed the high school to discuss them at all. Some important changes in this attitude have been effected by carefully designed motion pictures. Dr. Lester Beck, when he was at the University of Oregon, went out into the communities to find out just what they would permit. He found that he was able to produce motion pictures to which there has been remarkably little objection—for example, *Human Beginnings* and *Human Growth*. The motion pictures are set in the classroom and take a straightforward, natural approach, which seems to satisfy most parents. Many communities foster family viewings of the films, so that father, mother, son, and daughter see them together. Certainly this is only a beginning toward meeting a most difficult problem, but we have every reason to expect more materials now that these pioneer films have succeeded so well.

Audio-visual materials are useful not only because they help meet differences in learners, but also because they furnish good means of motivation. Suppose that the mathematics class is studying the cost of extending social security. What better stimulation than a tape recording of a rousing debate on the radio? Or suppose that the school orchestra is preparing for the spring concert. What keener challenge than a recording of some of last year's successes? The *preparation* of audio-visual materials (setting up a bulletin board display, making a model, drawing a graph, etc.) can also contribute to motivation because vivid, concrete knowledge of progress is made possible. Audio-visual experiences become not only a means to learn but a means to demonstrate that learning has occurred.

Some qualifications about audio-visual materials and experiences are necessary, however. They accomplish no miracles. The materials are good and useful enough without pretending that they end all teaching problems. To get sound learning, teachers and students still have to plan and work hard. The necessity for good mental and physical hygiene in the classroom, for opportunity to review and apply learning, for efficient classroom management—to name just three of the multitude of factors affecting learning—is as crucial as ever. Nor is an audio-visual aid good just because it is audio-visual. For example, motion pictures are sometimes shown whether or not they have a place in the unit of work. They are shown because they are in the building that day. It goes without saying that any instruc-

tional material—book, periodical, chart, recording, or motion picture—is useful only if it really “belongs” in the curriculum.

Why Use Newspapers, Periodicals, and Free Materials?

In the United States we have the largest variety of newspapers and periodicals in the world. Unquestionably they exercise great influence on the attitudes and actions of our people. A significant percentage of the population reads little beyond the daily newspaper and popular magazines. Such important sources of information and opinion belong in the classroom. There, the advantages and limitations of these media can be explored. Students can learn how best to use these resources now and as adults.

Similarly, no teacher can afford to neglect the wealth of instructional materials available at little or no cost from the federal, state, and local governments, from public service organizations, from foundations, from business and labor organizations. The advantages that accrue to the teacher who uses newspapers and periodicals may be supplemented with these resources. There are exhibits to be had, posters, pictures, pamphlets, maps, and books. The great majority has been issued without objectionable, partisan propaganda.

It should be apparent at once that these materials are also valuable in meeting individual differences and providing motivation. Everyone, for example, needs a feeling of status and recognition. Often this can be gained by capitalizing on long-established interests. Interest in such subjects as horses, stars, boats, and Indians may have been pursued to the point where students are experts in the field. There is mathematics in these interests (how do you determine good lines for a boat?); there is English (what was the quality of Navajo literature?); there is science (how far into the universe have we been able to see?); there is history (when were Arabian horses introduced into this country?)

Horses, stars, boats, and Indians figure in the newspapers, periodicals, and free materials regularly. It is relatively easy to get students to explain these articles to the class or to begin a scrapbook collection or to organize an exhibit.

The range in reading ability among high school students com-

monly appalls beginning teachers. Textbooks do not begin to meet their diverse needs, but there are newspapers, periodicals, and free materials on about every level. These have the great advantage of satisfying at the same time both the maturity of student interests and the immaturity of their reading skill.

Newspapers, periodicals, and free materials are designed to appeal to every degree of naiveté and sophistication. They have a flexibility of format, content, and style not equaled by the usual instructional materials. Some teachers have organized clipping committees, which cull magazines contributed by the class for articles of current or potential interest to the group. These are pasted on cards and filed by topic.

Before we can get active participation in learning, we must have reception and reflection. Too often the learning cycle does not even begin because students have not "tuned in" on the problem. They sit listening to the teacher, but they do not hear. They look steadfastly at the book, but they do not see (much less read). But if we can find a frequency that reaches where they live (for example, an editorial decrying the "hoodlumism" of youth), the change is instantaneous. All the marvelous intensity of adolescence flashes over the room. And learning begins.

The enormous variety of newspapers, periodicals, and free materials furnishes a kind of many-runged ladder to achievement. For some the steps will be slow; others will scorn to take each small gradation but clamber over several at a time. The point is that where these materials are used, we do not have lock-step education. We can allow each one to seek his own pace, whereas with a smaller range of materials this is impossible. As the student climbs his way, we do not have to tell him that he passed four rungs this month. He can see his progress himself.

Why Use the Textbook?

European visitors have long been impressed by the extent to which the textbook is used in American education. Probably a greater variety is available for each area of the curriculum than anywhere else in the world. Nor does any other country devote such attention

to classroom pretesting, to attractive format, to visualization of content, to frequent revision.

We cannot say that the textbook fails to meet the maturational problems induced by individual differences. It is likely to fail only when the instruction of a whole group of different people is tied to one textbook. But then the same could be said of any instructional material used by itself. *Instruction is better when more than one textbook is used and best when the textbook is used in conjunction with many other kinds of instructional materials.*

A landmark study of the textbook and its use in education has been made by a group of scholars at the University of Illinois. This study recognizes the importance of text materials and raises basic questions about their nature and use in the classroom. The issue, both for research and for teaching, is to find ways of improving text materials and their use in classrooms.³

Choosing Materials for Learning: What?

Material for learning derives its validity primarily from the curriculum. Of course, this assumes that the curricular design has taken realistic cognizance of the dual needs of society and the individual. This is another way of saying that the objectives of the curriculum must be sociologically and psychologically sound. Furthermore, the task undertaken by the high school must be feasible. The high school cannot undertake all responsibility for the development of youth. Other agencies have their responsibilities, too.

If curricular goals are assumed to be sound and feasible, then learning materials may be judged by their ability to implement the curriculum. On this basis, the following criteria can be established:

Materials should be appropriate to the general objectives of the curriculum. Each material should have its definite part to play in the curriculum. No one kind of material (books alone, or newspapers alone, or motion pictures alone) can be expected to provide the

³ Lee J. Cronbach, editor, *Text Materials in Education* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1955), pp. 3-4.

means to accomplish all objectives. With each objective, it is important to ascertain just what concepts, skills, attitudes, and appreciations each material can best further.

Materials should be appropriate to the specific objectives of the course of study and to a specific group of learners. The general objectives of the high school are a shared responsibility. In each class the teacher has his specific objectives. Because each class is made up of different individuals, the way to reach these specific objectives will vary from one class to another. The materials for learning must be appropriate to this way.

Materials should bridge school experiences and out-of-school life. As each class makes its own way toward its specific objectives, the learning materials must help relate the objectives to the daily lives of students.

Materials should emphasize student participation in the learning process. Learning materials should be a spur to student initiative. They should encourage creative discovery rather than the memorizing of ready-made solutions.

Materials belong in a graded sequence. Learning materials should be chosen to fit into a planned, continuing program of instruction.

Materials should stress learning, not entertainment. Providing a variety of instructional materials should not be construed as an invitation to convert the classroom into a vaudeville show. The material should promote learning. This goal should not be obscured by overindulgence in tricks or devices that do not engage students in purposeful learning.

These are general criteria to guide teachers in the selection of any kind of material for learning. Here are some additional suggestions to illustrate how further screening can be employed for each of the major groups of materials.

Selecting Motion Pictures and Television Programs

The motion picture and the television program are similar in the kind of learning experiences they can provide. Both have the unique ability to show the world in action through sight and sound and

color. It is possible to watch the drama of human relationships, real and imagined. It is possible to transport the viewer to places and events distant in time or in space. Microscopic life can be made to fill the screen. An explosion of a bomb, which in reality took a fraction of a second to occur, can be studied for minutes through slow-motion photography. Conversely, the unfolding of a flower, which in reality took hours, can be seen in a few moments through time-lapse photography. The complicated workings of a giant machine can be simplified as the camera focuses on one relevant operation at a time. Through animation photography, the operation can even be viewed from within, as in the case of the cylinders of an internal-combustion engine.

The first criterion of selection for the motion picture and the television program therefore is that it should exploit these unique advantages. An instructional motion picture or television program should not be merely a photographed lecture or, in effect, a series of still pictures. It should not be burdened with commentary about action that is never seen on the screen.

As the motion picture and the television program have unique advantages, so they have special disadvantages. Both present the material for learning at a fixed pace. The student must perforce move along at the speed determined by the producer of the material. This disadvantage can be overcome to some extent with the motion picture, since the film and scenes within the film can be reshown. But to promote the most efficient learning, both motion pictures and television programs should take account of the psychological principle of pacing. In simplest terms, this means that material of intellectual complexity or emotional intensity must be presented with deliberately planned intervals that permit the viewer to mull over what he has seen, heard, and felt. If enough time is allowed, the learner is ready then to accept another difficult or tense sequence. But if he is hit hard again and again without time to recover between hits, his preoccupation with the first hit may shut off further receptivity. In other words, the viewer stops learning.

This problem is particularly acute in the motion picture and the television program because these are expensive media. Among producers there is a tendency to load the typical ten-minute motion picture or the fifteen-minute television program with learning ma-

terial just because it costs so much to provide these few minutes. The idea seems to be to appeal to the greatest number of teachers. If enough concepts or skills or attitudes or appreciations are packed in, the argument runs, almost everybody will see something in it that he teaches. Of course, this is an utterly false kind of economy for learning, because when films and programs are so concentrated, they pass by most learners.

Another suggestion about choosing motion pictures and television programs is to select one with a good teaching pattern. For example, the film or program should employ sound means of motivating the student. This may mean setting unfamiliar material in familiar surroundings to facilitate engaging the students in the problem. Sometimes just a regular classroom setting serves the purpose. Or it may mean using as actors people the same age as the students. To sustain interest, the film or program should challenge the students to work along, at least mentally, as the action unfolds. Corollary problems not covered in the film or program may be suggested directly by the actors or commentator. In the closing sequences, the film or program may well have the actors or commentator speak directly to the students about their responsibility for further exploration of the problem.

Selecting Radio Broadcasts and Recordings

Unquestionably, radio broadcasts and recordings do not have the impact of motion pictures or television programs. The appeal of these media to learners is primarily aural, and thus the hold on attention is not so tenacious. Still, radio broadcasts and recordings may be quite useful in the classroom. They should be selected for their ability to bring to the classroom the manifold sounds of living—trains, planes, people, music—and for their ability to make possible in the classroom the creative expression of students in drama, discussion, song, and story. True, these media do not see the fullness of life; they only listen to it. But they can mean listening to living and not just to the teacher. The tremendous audience of radio before the competition of television indicates the power that is here. Until motion pictures and television programs become much

less expensive, radio and recordings will be the more practical media for many instructional purposes.

The limitations of listening must be recognized. In general, the attention span is shorter than when the eye is also engaged. The emotional hold is less powerful. Students can be distracted easily when listening to the radio or to recordings. The teacher will have to make realistic estimates about whether the program or recording can hope to engage the attention at all, and, if it can, for how long.

Attention is engaged longer and the effect strengthened if the program or recording has an easily recognizable structure. The outlines of what the student is to understand or appreciate should be joined in a coherent organization. He should be told early and explicitly just what the point of the program is and should be reminded as the program develops. He should be assisted by summation as the program ends. In dramatization, for example, the number of scenes and characters in each program should be sharply limited unless the group has had much training in listening. Each scene and each character needs careful introduction because, if the student fails to make the essential identifications, his interest plummets. Sudden shifts in time and place are to be held to a minimum for similar reasons. And, at the end, brief comments or suggestive questions by the announcer about what happened in the drama make learning more efficient.

Within these coherent program patterns, the radio broadcast or recording should limit the number of concepts introduced in any one presentation. The limitation should be even more severe than that imposed in motion pictures and television programs. For example, the twenty-minute motion picture *Due Process of Law Denied*, excerpted from the full-length feature picture *The Oxbow Incident*, easily includes material for three or four fifteen-minute radio dramatizations.

When the class is expected to retain much detail, that program or recording should be chosen which provides repetition of detail in a variety of ways. For example, if the radio program hopes to establish several qualities in the character of President Wilson, each of these qualities may have to be seen in two or three revealing episodes.

The last criterion will be obvious as soon as it is mentioned,

yet it is crucial to the success of these media. The narrators, speakers, or participants in drama must employ good diction and clear enunciation. The presentation is to the ear alone, and if the ear cannot clearly distinguish the words, no learning can take place.

Choosing Film Strips and Slides

Slides and film strips are similar to radio programs and recordings in that they appeal to one sense only, but they are different in that they permit study and discussion at any point and for as long as the class wishes. Film strips and slides, therefore, should be chosen for their adequacy in stimulating study and discussion.

To accomplish this kind of stimulation, the amount of detail and the number of captions or labels in any one slide or picture in a film strip should be limited. For example, so many parts of a flower may be labeled that the student either becomes confused or never focuses his attention at all. The appeal of a series of slides or pictures in a film strip can be strengthened by variety of treatment. Close-up, medium, and long photographic shots can be employed. The possibilities of diagrams, cut-aways, exploded views, graphs, and cartoons should not be overlooked.

Selecting Newspapers and Periodicals

Two kinds of newspapers and periodicals are used in the classroom: those especially prepared for the classroom, and those published for the general adult market. Obviously, the problem of selection with the first kind is much simpler than with the second. They are produced by experienced educators who are aware of teachers' problems. Of course, not all succeed uniformly well, so there is still some room for choice.

Probably the most important consideration with respect to the newspaper or periodical designed for classroom use is the quality of its interpretation and selection of news stories, articles, and library materials. These newspapers and periodicals do not pretend to be abreast of each day's events. When they reach the classroom, the news is somewhat dated. Students will be familiar with a good many of the facts from reading adult newspapers, listening to the radio,

viewing television, and hearing the conversation of their parents and others. A simple record of the news, then, is not enough. Students need interpretive comment to start them thinking about the significance of the facts, and the quality of this comment should be the first criterion of selection.

Naturally, it is important that the interpretive comment be nonpartisan. Opposing points of view should be fairly stated. It should not be the purpose of this kind of publication to propagandize for one side or the other.

Next in importance is the vocabulary of the material. Reading experts have made available a number of guides to readability, and a good classroom newspaper will have been checked for readability in order to avoid an unrealistic vocabulary burden.

Some attention should also be given to the make-up of a classroom newspaper or periodical. It ought to invite attention through good design, avoiding the arrangement of articles like tombstones in a solemn row. Pictures, cartoons, maps, and graphs should be used liberally.

Finally, classroom newspapers and periodicals can be chosen for the quality of the teaching guide offered. This supplemental sheet, published for the teacher, should emphasize how the teacher can guide his students in reading newspapers and periodicals with increasing discrimination.

When one comes to select adult newspapers and periodicals for the classroom, the problem is much more difficult. In the first place, the number of publications available is overwhelming, and, second they manage to violate most of the precepts just listed as guides to the selection of newspapers and periodicals published especially for classroom use. They are rarely nonpartisan; their vocabulary is not geared to the classroom; their make-up ranges from the sensational to the ultraconservative.

Still, these are the materials on which students will depend to an important extent when they are adults. It is not wise to exclude them from the classroom, for where but in the classroom will youth learn to penetrate prejudiced information or to graduate from the cheap and superficial? What is important is to offer a comprehensive sampling from these materials. In many communities, only one newspaper is published. Students should become acquainted with

other newspapers, differing in quality and temperament, in order to be able to view their own community newspaper in proper perspective. In many homes, the only periodicals read are chosen from the five or six national leaders in circulation; and in still other homes, no periodicals of any kind are read. Students therefore need to examine and compare in the objective atmosphere of the classroom not only the popular favorites but some of the lesser known magazines.

Selecting Free Materials

Many millions of dollars are spent by commercial firms and public and private agencies on materials to influence public opinion. A large portion of these materials is aimed at the classroom. But whether or not especially tailored for the schools, the materials may comprise a valuable resource.⁴ Certainly they should not be used without carefully educating students to discern bias and slanting of information. As was noted earlier, the sponsors of these materials are becoming increasingly intelligent in refraining from extravagant singing of their own praises, but the materials would not be sponsored so widely unless they offered some opportunity to advance special interests. As in the case of adult newspapers and periodicals, however, the students will be assailed by special-interest materials all their lives. They must learn discrimination somewhere. In choosing free materials for classroom use, you will wish to consider such questions as these:

Is the material genuinely related to your curricular objectives?

Is it in good taste?

Is it an advertising piece, or does it keep advertising to an absolute minimum?

Choosing Textbooks

Beginning teachers may not often have a hand in choosing the textbooks for their classes. Nevertheless, they should know how to judge the strengths and weaknesses of the books selected for them. First of all, teachers should see how well the authors of the textbook seem to know the adolescent. Does the book relate the interests,

⁴ Franklin K. Patterson, "Free Teaching Aids in California Schools," *California Journal of Educational Research*, 1:165-168, 210-214, September, November 1950.

needs, abilities, backgrounds, and experiences of adolescents to the content presented? Is the style brisk and alive rather than overdignified and dead? Is the format attractive? Are the illustrations abundant? Unless the book is thus aware of the adolescent, the textbook deters, rather than encourages, learning.

Some evidence should be offered by the publishers that the development of concepts, attitudes, and skills in the text has been tested in the classroom. This evidence, presented to schools by publishers, should include analysis of the vocabulary burden; systematic provision for repetition, summary, and review; and suggestions for a wide range of supplemental materials and activities.

Using Materials: How?

Some Basic Principles of Use

Learning is never induced automatically. Whether the learning experience involves a dramatized episode, a demonstration, a mock-up, a motion picture, a newspaper, or a textbook, teachers and students must be closely engaged in its planning and execution. Some enthusiasts imply that the tape recorder, the television set, the motion picture, or the textbook will guarantee better learning, whatever the class or its teacher is like and whichever way they are going. Of course, this is nonsense. Teachers and students need to work as hard as they ever did. With a better range of instructional materials and experiences, a better range of learning is possible. But it is not guaranteed.

For example, a basic pattern of instruction must be followed with learning materials. This is especially important for those materials that have their own tempo once a presentation is begun: motion pictures, television programs, radio broadcasts, recordings. By and large, with these four materials, the student must keep pace. This places a premium on (1) readiness for learning, (2) acceptance of responsibility for active participation, and (3) follow-up activities for evaluating learning. Even with slides, film strips, models, mock-ups, exhibits, flat pictures, and other audio-visual materials, these three elements in a basic pattern of instruction are important. Here are three principles for the wise use of materials:

Ensure readiness. No learning material should be used until its purpose has been clearly established. A motion picture must fit into the on-going learning experience just as a textbook or a periodical must. The learning material should be related to previous activities, problems, and materials.

Develop responsibility for active participation. You must help students anticipate what the new material may require for effective learning. You can raise guide questions that suggest key concepts to be looked for in the material. Auxiliary problems and materials for follow-up activities can be planned.

Conduct follow-up activities. The amount of learning achieved should not be taken for granted. There should always be evaluation to see what was learned. The pace of presentation may have been too swift. Some students may have been left behind. Others may not have understood the material completely. Still others may have gained quite false impressions.

Any of these difficulties may require re-presentation of the material or turning to another material or activity. Even when the learning seems to have been developed efficiently, the opportunity to move into new materials and activities should not be neglected. The material you have just used may form an excellent springboard—have developed readiness—for other useful learning materials. The film strip “The Atom,” for example, includes a number of laboratory demonstrations. Most of them need further explanation. Students might turn to reference works and periodicals and prepare reports. Charts illustrating the points in further detail might be made. Some simple experiments might be carried out.

These three principles, imaginatively applied, can help you make the use of any learning material more effective. *Readiness*, *responsible participation*, and *follow-up* are features of good teaching with all materials.

Sources of Learning Materials

You may well raise the question, How do I secure good materials for my teaching? It is one thing to discuss the value and use of materials; perhaps it is another to lay your hands on the best tools as they are needed. Fortunately, teachers in America's high schools increasingly have available to them an impressive array of

materials from a great variety of sources. Probably the essential ingredients for capitalizing on this opportunity are *imagination* and *initiative* on your part.

For example, you are likely to find your own school or school system a considerable resource of materials. Part of your business as a teacher is to find out what materials, equipment, and facilities your school or school system can provide through regular channels. Here is a place where initiative will serve you well. The high school administrator may see to it that you are well informed about materials and facilities available. But if he does not, it is up to you to make your own assessment of the tools at hand. Often you will find that materials and equipment are available simply for the asking. Sometimes you will discover that useful maps, models, flat pictures, and machines have been gathering dust simply for lack of use. In a sense, you can make your own opportunity as far as materials go by surveying what is available and putting it to work for you.

There are less obvious sources of material in your school, too. Here is where your imagination can combine with initiative to increase your kit of tools. Many teachers overlook the fact that they and their students can learn by being creators or innovators of materials for learning. Not all of our high schools are equally well supplied with equipment and materials. The enterprising teacher knows that learning material, like gold, is where you find it.

Mr. Haig, the ninth-grade social studies teacher, was known throughout North High for the lively, interesting use his classes made of newspapers, periodicals, and free materials. His reputation was no accident. In Mr. Haig's very first year at North, he started to build what he called his "resource file." He had lots of help from his students in doing the job. When Mr. Haig found that fancy steel file cabinets were simply not available, he and his students built some simple files out of orange crates. They stained these and labeled them according to an over-all organization of topics. Within these larger divisions, subtopics were selected. This was simply a way to facilitate location of those materials for which Mr. Haig and his classes had use during their work together. The resource file came to be a genuine treasure trove. In it, in labeled folders, were placed pictures, clippings from newspapers, articles from magazines, pamphlets, smaller charts, and maps. Reviews and catalogs of available motion pictures, film strips, slides, recordings, television and radio broadcasts were also to be found there.

Every year, Mr. Haig's students helped add to the resource file.

They would find pictures, pamphlets, charts, and articles which were helpful in their work and which remained in the file to be of use to students in later years. Usually, Mr. Haig's classes had regular clipping committees, which culled good articles and stories from a variety of sources. These were mounted on large cards, each one containing several articles or stories on the same topic or theme, and then filed in the proper place. When Mr. Haig's students needed facts they could not find in their textbooks, or when a unit of work required research on a special topic, there was usually something helpful to be found in the resource file. These were orange crates with a difference!

Initiative and imagination will also serve you well in exploiting the local community as a source for good learning materials. You will find that there are important human resources in your community—people with something to offer your students, people who have an important story or experience to share. Businessmen, civic leaders, old settlers, government officials—these may offer a priceless “learning material” to you and your students. In your search for learning materials, you are likely also to find that the library service of your community can be highly useful. It goes without saying that you should be able to turn to your community libraries for books and other printed materials. The modern library, however, is usually able to supply you and your students with many other kinds of aids. For example, many libraries today maintain collections of films, recordings, pamphlets, pictures, and other materials that will stand you in good stead. There are, in addition, many other sources of learning materials and experiences that your community may supply. Museums, historical sites, manufacturing plants, public utilities, working farms, zoos, and a host of other possibilities for learning may be found in your own back yard. More and more, teachers are realizing that the classroom does not have four walls; that the classroom at its best can be the community and the world. The soil, the trees, the crops, the rivers, the lakes, the streets and neighborhoods and institutions of your school's community provide a laboratory for learning.

Increasingly, you have available to you sources of learning materials *outside* your own school and community. Here, the opportunities to secure aids for the teaching-learning process seem almost infinite. Membership in professional associations and reading of professional journals will open many doors for you. Not only will you

learn about currently available materials and where to secure them, but you will discover imaginative ways in which other teachers have contrived experiences and materials that have made learning an interesting adventure and a worth-while challenge. You will find that nonprofessional sources are offering you an increased supply of materials as well as stimulating information about them. Each year, for example, the *Saturday Review* takes a look at the tools that are currently being used in American schoolrooms. The *Saturday Review* surveys educational films, special teaching techniques, and how teachers use and feel about new devices as they become available.

You will also find that there are numerous helpful inexpensive catalogs of materials, some of which themselves are inexpensive or free. One of the best of these general lists, *Sources of Teaching Materials*, may be obtained for a nominal fee from the teaching aids laboratory of the Bureau of Educational Research at Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio. This list is issued regularly and kept up to date. It provides you with information about sources of films, film strips, slides, radio and television programs, educational recordings, free and inexpensive teaching aids, and materials for the study of other nations. Another well-known list is prepared by Dr. Henry Harap, Associate Director of the Division of Surveys and Field Services at George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, Tennessee. This list is entitled *Free and Inexpensive Learning Materials*. It includes more than 2,000 materials that have been evaluated in Dr. Harap's office. The majority of these materials cost fifty cents or less. These are only two of the lists of learning materials available to you outside your own school and community. A little careful looking will lead you to many others, some of them devoted to special interests and subject areas.

Learning Materials in Action

In the many comprehensive books on audio-visual materials,⁵ you will find numerous helpful examples of and suggestions for, the use of learning materials. In addition, a number of valuable special professional journals devoted to instructional materials may be

⁵ One of the best of these is *The Audio Visual Reader*, edited by James S. Kinder and F. Dean McClusky (Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Company, 1954). This book contains almost two hundred authoritative articles on practical ways and means in audio-visual education.

consulted.⁶ Tapping the resources listed in these books and periodicals on a continuing basis will strengthen your teaching. You will find yourself increasingly competent in the use of learning materials.

Our purpose here is not to try to condense what these resources have to offer, but to suggest a few of the applications that learning materials and facilities can have in the high school. In looking at learning materials in action, we wish to emphasize again something that is often overlooked in the discussion and preparation of teaching aids. In the past, some producers and some teachers have viewed learning materials and devices as *substitutes for teaching*. This is a risky concept at best. *Learning materials cannot stand alone*. No single film, recording, or other material, nor any combination of them, can be relied upon to replace the function of the creative teacher and the meaningful, on-going, planned curricular sequence.

Both producers and teachers should view and evaluate instructional materials in terms of how effectively and creatively they can be used in a process in which the learner is not a passive receptacle but an active participant, "finding out" and "trying out." Beware of looking at materials (e.g. films) as a handy gimmick for funneling learning painlessly and in quantity into the greatest possible number of empty heads. Always look at materials and facilities as *aiding* the teaching-learning process in which you and your students are the active partners, but never *replacing* that partnership.

COMBINING SEVERAL TOOLS FOR GOOD TEACHING

Mr. Richards was a French teacher. He knew from long experience how dull and fruitless a straight grammar-vocabulary-translate-a-little-story approach could be. And he wasn't willing to be the kind of French teacher who used that kind of approach.

Here are some of the things he did to make French an exciting adventure in living and learning. Here are some of the reasons why boys and girls—not just those who were college-bound—were eager to "have Mr. Richards for French."

For one thing, Mr. Richards always started with the assumption that French could be learned, could be fun to learn. When another teacher rather smugly remarked that "Only the brighter students really have the capacity to learn French," Mr. Richards was quick to reply. He asked his colleague whether it was likely that all French-

⁶ Space does not permit a listing of such journals. Among many excellent periodicals, however, is *Instructional Materials*, published by the Department of Audio-Visual Instruction, National Education Association, 1201 16 Street, N.W., Washington, D. C.

men could speak French. His colleague looked a bit baffled but said "Ye-es." Mr. Richards pursued the subject, asking whether it would be reasonable to say that human intelligence was probably normally distributed among the French. Again his colleague hesitantly replied "Ye-es." "Then," Mr. Richards said, "If French apparently can be learned by all Frenchmen, the not-so-bright as well as the bright, how can we say that 'only our brighter students have the capacity' to learn this language? Maybe it isn't our students who fall down; maybe it's our own teaching that does."

Needless to say, Mr. Richards' reasoning in this instance didn't win him the undying friendship of his colleague. But the point was dear to his heart. He believed French could be taught to most boys and girls. What made the difference was how.

Mr. Richards' classroom itself was part of the "how" of his effective teaching. It was a little corner of France. In it was a constantly changing array of posters, of art prints from Watteau through Picasso, of wall maps, of objects of art that Mr. Richards had brought back from France, of displays of students' work, news bulletins about French foreign relations. The room library featured a variety of French fiction all the way from Babar to Beauvoir. It even had regular copies of *Ce Soir*, a Paris daily. The room had a general air of being lived in and worked in by people who had France very much on their minds.

Then, too, Mr. Richards had selected texts for his classes with care and with the friendly cooperation of the principal. For introductory French, Mr. Richards chose a text whose publisher also issued a companion series of disc recordings for play in the classroom. Mr. Richards had secured from the school administrator an inexpensive but adequate long-play phonograph for using these discs, gearing them lesson by lesson to the text.

Like many other foreign-language teachers, Mr. Richards also sought to expose his students to French language and literature through films. Some time ago Mr. Richards had come across the Society for French-American Cultural Services and Educational Aid. At a remarkably low cost (something like fifteen dollars a year), Mr. Richards' school was able to select and receive from the Society one film a month, and there were literally hundreds of French films to choose from. Most of these were in French without subtitles, but some supplied accompanying texts for classroom study. Through these films the architecture, arts, crafts, geography, and history of France were graphically demonstrated. There were films about famous cities, cathedrals, and the countryside of France itself. In addition to these motion pictures, Mr. Richards was able to secure slides, records, and film strips at normal cost from the Society.⁷

Mr. Richards also used the tape recorder. He kept abreast of im-

⁷ The Society's address is 972 Fifth Avenue, New York 22, New York.

provements in foreign-language instruction. He was aware of how the armed forces and various colleges and universities had been able to individualize and speed up foreign-language instruction through the use of electronic devices. On the basis of his information, Mr. Richards persuaded the school administration to conduct an experiment in the improvement of French instruction. This experiment was to continue for a period of four years. One of its features was the erection of seven cubicles along the back wall of the room. Each of these cubicles was furnished with an inexpensive tape recorder equipped with ear phones and a microphone. In the practice cubicles individual students were able to record and listen to the playback of their own use of the French language. Needless to say, Mr. Richards' classroom was utilized almost constantly during the school day. During lunch hours and free periods you could almost always find students using some of the facilities he had assembled there.

And, *naturellement*, Mr. Richards also utilized the traditional tools of foreign-language instruction. He emphasized conversation in French in his classroom. Students were expected to complete exercises, to learn grammar and vocabulary, and to take tests. But the whole atmosphere in which these customary activities took place was different by far from that you would have found if only these activities had been available.

Mr. Richards may seem more like a denizen of Utopia than a flesh-and-blood teacher in a typical American high school. Mr. Richards' classroom included some tools that are certainly not uniformly available to foreign-language teachers. But the point here is that such tools are and will be increasingly available. It is our responsibility, as high school teachers, to think not of the past and the limitations under which we worked in an earlier day, but of the future and the possibilities and responsibilities it will bring. In Mr. Richards' classroom, in one of the most academic of all subjects, a variety of tools were employed to aid the job of teaching. Some of these tools were as old as foreign-language instruction itself. Some of them were as new as tomorrow.

SUMMARY

In this chapter we have tried to show how much the planning, development, and effectiveness of the teaching-learning process depend on creative use of learning materials. We have discussed ma-

terials of direct experience, materials of vicarious experience, and materials of symbolic experience. We have seen that, as teachers, we must not be "prisoners of the word," depending solely on words and other symbols to stimulate learning.

At the same time, we have divorced ourselves from a view of learning materials as "gimmicks" that can substitute for the act and art of teaching. We have emphasized the need for richness and variety, for gearing learning materials to the individual differences and development of the boys and girls we teach.

Nowhere have we found a single magic key to teaching—no device or material perfect for all purposes. Rather, we have seen examples of the infinite ways materials may be developed and used for creative teaching.

One thing we are sure of: Read-recite-test is an impoverished way of teaching. Today we are on the threshold of a thrilling age, in which tools for teaching and learning multiply on every hand. These tools must be tested and evaluated and used selectively. But through them, and through what we are coming to understand of the teaching-learning process, we can lend our teaching the touch of art and greatness that the times demand.

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Using Community Resources

THE BASIC MEDIUM for learning is direct experience. From the day of birth, our fundamental concepts are formed from the stuff of day-to-day living. Of course, it is not feasible to conduct all learning out of direct experience, even though the primary meanings come from there. But, on the other hand, it is not efficient to operate most of the time on a plane of abstractions that are far removed from everyday living.

The best teaching, as we have pointed out in the preceding chapter, ranges up and down through many levels of experience from direct to abstract and back again. This is possible not only with learning *materials*, but with learning *activities*. In the following chapters, the teacher will see how the full range of learning activities, from discussion to group work, may be employed. It is only natural that the first chapter on learning activities should concern itself with the very best source of direct real-life experience: the community. Here is where the young people have been raised, where they have

learned their modes of behavior, and where many of them will find their future. It is important that the lessons of the school contribute to community life as it is lived.

Purposes of Community Study

Each junior or senior high school is a part of a larger community. This community may encompass a whole town or half a county; it may comprise a few densely populated city blocks or a newly sprung suburban tract. The events that transpire in each of these settings often affect not only the character of the school program but the way students feel and act.

The general community background has many implications for the teacher. However, each student has a strong sense of his own "community" within the larger community. If he has lived in several different towns or cities, it has usually been at the same socioeconomic level. If he has always lived in an underprivileged neighborhood, the move from a poor neighborhood in Chicago to a poor neighborhood in St. Louis will not materially affect his outlook. Nor will moving from upper-class, suburban Los Angeles to an upper-class village on Long Island shift perspective very much. Students from homes that encourage book-reading, that take youngsters on extensive vacation trips—homes where music and art and dancing lessons are the rule rather than the exception—find the academic life of the school familiar and comfortable. But the school faces difficulties in reaching youngsters from homes where education is little prized and cultural activities are scorned.

One purpose, then, of community study is to broaden the view of what life has to offer. Adolescents can be fairly myopic. They see what is right in front of them, and this may appear to be the whole of life. The pessimism about the future expressed by so many lower-class adolescents comes in great part from their inability to see that other ways of life are possible. And the snobbery of the upper-class youth is just as limiting and derives from a similar kind of ignorance about how the other two thirds live. The school can and must help adolescents overcome the provincialism of youth. As

adolescents realize that the known way is not the only way, they can make wise and rewarding choices.

Another need for community study derives from the high mobility of our people. A large part of our population is constantly on the move. Today families seem to buy and sell a house almost as casually as they used to trade in an old car for a new one. What does this mean to adolescents? It means, as we read the statistics and talk with individuals, that many of these youngsters have lived in a number of different places. They have made friends, then been moved away, and have had to face the prospect of starting the friendship process all over again.

To be a stranger means to be an alien. This is a difficult enough experience for adults; what must it mean to children and adolescents? During childhood, the security of the family aids the adjustment to new places and new people. But during adolescence, when family security is being exchanged for security in oneself and with one's peers, the experience of being new, of being a stranger, can be a very disturbing one. In this sense, adolescents moving from community to community not only do not increase their life space, but even constrict it.

Community study may be a means of giving adolescents guidance not only in an intellectual sense, but in a personal-emotional sense as well. Helping a young person realize that there are many patterns of community life is one valuable guide toward the adult world. But even more important is providing a young person with a sense of *knowing* where he is and how he can fit into the new community.

For adolescents, there are several other significant purposes of community study:

To understand the interrelations among community enterprises. The concept of the community, with its welter of organizations, individuals, and programs may appear unmanageable and hence frustrating to the adolescent. He does not know his way among the network of organizations and institutions in his home town or neighborhood, much less in any other community. In order to establish some basis for adult participation in community organizations, the school should provide concrete experiences with community groups. These experiences should include not only the civic groups and

government agencies, but the business, recreational, professional, labor, and cultural organizations as well.

To provide a way of checking values. The contradictions of our culture become strikingly apparent to adolescents. They see, for example, a negative attitude toward divorce, yet a rising divorce rate; a rejection of alcoholism, yet high-pressure advertising to promote drinking. Personal moral decisions must be made by adolescents; the values they have presumably gained at school, at home, and in church are tested in the community itself. It is essential that young people be given an opportunity to make appraisals of community standards while mature and objective counseling can have its greatest impact.

To develop a concept of citizenship. Many adults are apathetic toward the responsibility of citizenship because they equate it with casting a vote at election time. The attitude is all too prevalent that the individual's one vote matters little. Actually, the kind of citizenship really vital for the survival of democracy involves conscientious participation not only at the polls but in many spheres of public life. This is the view of citizenship that adolescents must develop. They can gain it only through varied contacts with the community, its problems, and the processes through which they are solved.

To learn to accept limits on individual impulse and desire. By governing himself in the school community and in his own youth organizations, by direct learning about the law and the courts and other institutions of government, the young person can see that the ordering of lives in the community is essential to the survival of the individual. Institutions of control are too often viewed as enemies by the adolescent because contact usually occurs only at moments of conflict.

To gain a realistic view of what it means to be an adult. Not only must adolescents read about the worlds of work, of citizenship, and of culture; they must actually confront these spheres. What does it mean to work in a modern factory or in a business firm or as a professional person? What kinds of people actually perform the jobs that are attractive to a particular adolescent? How does the adult fit into the structure of our democratic governmental processes—and how does the structure affect his daily life? The answers to these and other questions become more impressive when they are validated in community experience.

To utilize resources we cannot duplicate in the classroom. One cannot construct a swamp or reproduce conditions in a factory or business for the purposes of education. But these conditions do exist in the community. They are as much part of the material of learning as are our texts.

Community Resources in the Curriculum

"But I teach a basic skill course, typing. How can community resources help me?" This is a very proper query, as it would be from the mathematics teacher, the science teacher, the physical education teacher, or indeed from the instructor in any field whose relationship to community resources is not immediately apparent. Let us suggest some answers:

In a typing class: The secretary of one of the leading businessmen in town is invited to describe the qualifications necessary for getting a top job.

The typing class visits a firm that employs many typists. The students observe the many tasks that a typist may perform. They interview the personnel director regarding preparation, qualifications, working conditions, salary.

In mathematics: Groups of students are assigned different kinds of businesses in the immediate locality. They interview the manager or owner to determine what kinds of mathematics are used.

A banker is invited to visit the class to show the uses of percentage. A credit bureau representative discusses the mathematics of credit buying.¹

In physical education: Since the physical education teacher is often the teacher of hygiene classes (on rainy days), he will have many opportunities to use the community's resources for protecting individual health. A visit to the local health department would be useful; inviting a dentist to class to discuss teeth and nutrition would be feasible.

Finding the community's resources for recreation and physical activity can be one of the most lasting contributions of a physical

¹ K. P. Kidd and K. D. Brown, Comps., *Teaching Materials for Mathematics Classes*, U. S. Office of Education, Circular No. 399 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1955).

education program, since it may provide young people with a way of keeping physically fit and active after they have left school.

These are only a few of the possibilities in three subjects. There are, of course, many more. After all, it is difficult to think of any topic taught in the high school that does not, in some way, relate to adult life in the community.

Building a Community Resource File

Where do you begin? The first step is to find the available resources in a community; then to organize these into a resource file of persons, places, and organizations appropriate to a teaching field. As a beginning teacher, you may well have to depend on your own initiative and that of your students in building such a file of resources, since it is highly probable that few other members of a typical high school faculty will be making full use of the community.

The first requisite for a good resource file is an open mind and an alert eye. The swamp that lies along the highway may be a fine place for finding polluted water or various decorative grasses, or interviewing families who live in the no man's land of barges and river boats. The second requirement is a sensible system of organization. The file should be accessible, easy to use, abundantly cross-referenced. A source useful for one kind of activity may also be very useful in another context for another class. In organizing your own file cards, you may find the following headings useful:

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| 1. Unit of study | |
| 2. Name of resource | Address |
| 3. Place: travel directions as needed | |
| 4. Person to contact | Telephone |
| 5. Suggested use in class | |
| 6. Limits on use | |
| 7. Evaluation: when and how used; results; recommendations for use next time ² | |

² A good file card form is reproduced in *Fifty Teachers to a Classroom*, Committee on Human Resources, Metropolitan School Study Council (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1950), p. 43.

The file entry should indicate which resources are good and which poor for a particular topic or theme. This saves considerable wear and tear on the memory. It is often difficult to remember just what did happen when the fire commissioner came to class, or whether the students gained much from a visit to the automobile plant. A good resource file refreshes memory at a glance.

The Field Trip

Much has been written about the value of the field trip, yet many students go through high school with no field-trip experience. Why is this? The most significant deterrent is the organization of the high school day. When the student has only one fifty-minute period with a teacher, it will obviously cause a major disruption if this teacher wishes to undertake a field trip lasting for more than a single class period. It is also clear that few worth-while field trips can be conducted in fifty minutes. Moreover, the teacher himself must face a different class each hour, and in good conscience he cannot often slough this responsibility off on another faculty member or assign students to the library.

Can these barriers be overcome? Approval of the school administration and cooperation by other faculty members are essential. If a field trip means encroaching on the class time of another teacher, then clearly no teacher is justified in asking for such a dispensation very often. If, however, a good reciprocal arrangement can be worked out ("If you let my students out for a biology field trip, then I will gladly excuse your students to practice the senior play"), the field trip can be used more frequently.

Planning

Although many high schools have established rules for field trips to guide the beginning teacher, the actual planning of a field trip is time-consuming enough so that a teacher can rarely take many during a semester. If, for example, the teacher has five classes, he is confronted with the mass of detail for five different field trips. The very

High school teachers sometimes forget the dramatic potential of what they teach. The world around us is in revolutionary transition: political and economic decisions of far-reaching importance are being made; industry and technology are transforming our world beyond recognition; new scientific frontiers are being crossed daily; exciting new art forms are giving man new ways to express himself. The twentieth century is perhaps the most exciting of all periods in history.

Yet we are apt to be prosaic about this world of great and far-reaching change and to let that prosaic attitude show in our teaching. We forget that most adolescents have a keen sense of the dramatic—and an equally keen sense of the dull and boring. The teen-ager can and does respond to the real thing, whether it be the excitement of the changing and new or the majesty of the old and wise, and by that response his learning is stimulated and enriched.

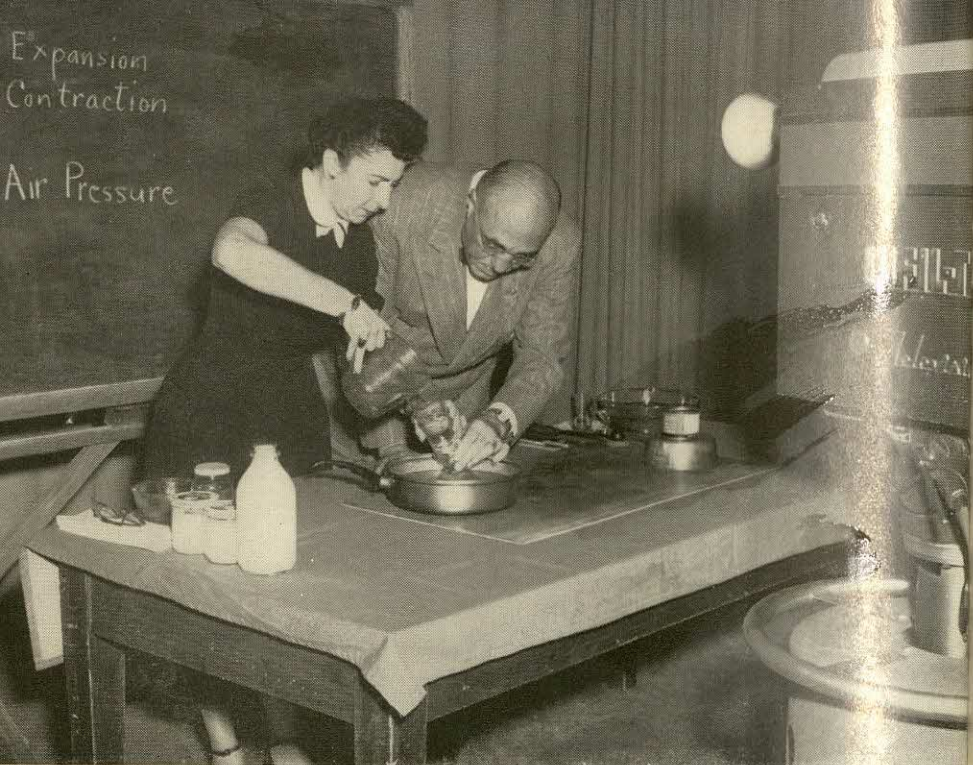
In this picture, before words we all know, a lone boy stands in the shadow of greatness. Here a man, a war, a nation gain new meaning with dramatic impact. Here is a vivid moment of learning. How can we provide many more such moments? Must we have access to national shrines or their equivalents, or are there practical ways in which our teaching can inspire as well as instruct without them?

[Photo courtesy Harold M. Lambert Studios]

FOUR SCORE AND SEVEN YEARS
AGO OUR FATHERS BROUGHT FORTH
ON THIS CONTINENT A NEW NATION
CONCEIVED IN LIBERTY AND DEDICA-
TED TO THE PROPOSITION THAT ALL
MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL.

NOW WE ARE ENGAGED IN A GREAT
CIVIL WAR TESTING WHETHER THAT
NATION OR ANY NATION SO CON-
CEIVED AND SO DEDICATED CAN LONG
ENDURE. WE ARE MET ON A GREAT
BATTLEFIELD OF THAT WAR. WE HAVE
COME TO DEDICATE A PORTION OF
THAT FIELD AS A FINAL RESTING
PLACE FOR THOSE WHO HERE GAVE
THEIR LIVES THAT THAT NATION
MIGHT LIVE. IT IS ALTOGETHER FIT-
TING AND PROPER THAT WE SHOULD
DO THIS. BUT IN A LARGER SENSE
WE CAN NOT DEDICATE - WE CAN NOT
CONSECRATE - WE CAN NOT HALLOW -
THIS GROUND. THE BRAVE MEN LIV-
ING AND DEAD WHO STRUGGLED HERE
HAVE CONSECRATED IT FAR ABOVE
OUR POOR POWER TO ADD OR DETRACT.
THE WORLD WILL LITTLE NOTE NOR
LONG REMEMBER WHAT WE SAY HERE
BUT IT CAN NEVER FORGET WHAT THEY
DID HERE. IT IS FOR US THE LIVING
RATHER TO BE DEDICATED HERE TO
THE UNFINISHED WORK WHICH THEY
WHO FOUGHT HERE HAVE THUS FAR
SO NOBLY ADVANCED. IT IS RATHER FOR
US TO BE HERE DEDICATED TO THE
GREAT TASK REMAINING BEFORE US -
THAT FROM THESE HONORED DEAD
WE TAKE INCREASED DEVOTION TO
THAT CAUSE FOR WHICH THEY GAVE THE
LAST FULL MEASURE OF DEVOTION -
THAT WE HERE HIGHLY RESOLVE THAT
THESE DEAD SHALL NOT HAVE DIED IN
VAIN - THAT THIS NATION UNDER GOD
SHALL HAVE A NEW BIRTH OF FREEDOM -
AND THAT GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE
BY THE PEOPLE FOR THE PEOPLE SHALL
NOT PERISH FROM THE EARTH.





No other device for instruction has ever been introduced that has had the potential impact of television. Even after several years we are only beginning to discover the uses (and, perhaps, the abuses) to which we may put this instrument in our hard-pressed secondary school rooms.

Of this much we may be reasonably sure: television exerts a powerful, almost an hypnotic, attraction; like any mechanical aid, it lacks flexibility—one must use it when *it* is ready, even if the students are not; it presents us with a complex problem if we are to learn how to use it well.

Here we see Miss Bess Berg, of the radio-television staff of the Philadelphia Public Schools, with Dr. A. Barnhardt, science lecturer from Temple University, presenting a demonstration for educational use. In the second picture, professional personnel of General Electric conduct a workshop for teachers concerned with programming educational television. Here is a part of educational "know-how" which was undreamed of twenty years ago.

How can we use television in high school instruction without losing the vitality of direct interchange between teacher and learner? How can we utilize this powerful new medium without being used by it? As class sizes increase and high school teachers remain in short supply, what can we do to adapt this great but impersonal medium to the service of education? [Photos courtesy The School Executive]

thought of this kind of planning is enough to discourage most teachers. The planning problems may, however, be solved in a number of different ways. First, the preplanning may be done almost wholly by students. With functioning student committees, the teacher may find that most of the work can be done for him. A simple outline, planned by teacher and students, will suffice for a framework:

1. What is the purpose of the field trip?
2. Where can we go?
3. What places will allow our class to visit?
4. How do we get there?
5. What transportation is needed? Where can we get it? How much will it cost?
6. How long will it take?
7. Whose permission must we have? Has this been obtained? How? (Principal, parents, other)
8. Can students be excused from other classes?
9. What are we to look for?
10. How will the trip be reported?
11. What study is needed before the trip to make it more meaningful?

Assigning Responsibility

This list will set a framework within which to assign specific individual or committee responsibility. After a few days of exploration, the committees may report back to the class. Then, after some consultation with the teacher, the trip is practically arranged. If the teacher has previously collected a few suggested community resources for possible field trips, the students are able to plan with a minimum of fumbling. Much of the student planning can be done after school, or a few students can be dismissed for one hour. In arranging the field trip for the whole group, the students save time for the teacher and are given practice in assuming genuine responsibility.

They used to let us out of class to do our community study, and I thought this would be a good chance to get away with something. But you know, it was surprising how interested we got in our projects. The teacher must have seen to it that the groups investigating different aspects of the New Deal became somewhat competitive,

because we all worked like dogs, even if we weren't in class, trying to collect our data from the community sources we had ourselves unearthed.

Substitute for Homework

To obtain time beyond the class hour, field study may be made a substitute for textbook homework. Groups of students living in the same general vicinity may be asked to interview some local residents; teams may be assigned the job of visiting downtown stores to check price differences; or others may go to city offices to talk with officials or to watch courts in action. The community-centered assignment takes the place of more passive kinds of learning. And what about those who work after school? Their assignments may be geared to the weekend, rather than to the work week, or they may be excused from this kind of study. The idea that all students have to do the same thing all the time is a strait jacket that modern education refuses to wear. Cooperative planning with students will make clear what responsibilities each may best undertake.

Financing the Trip

Cost is an important problem to consider in planning field trips. The average student in high school has very little extra money. It is wise for the teacher to think ahead about this problem in order to avoid excluding from a valuable trip a student who may be unable to pay his way. Some teachers place a collection box in the front of the room so that everyone can make his contribution without others knowing whether it is less than was suggested. The teacher should be prepared to make up a deficit, which probably will be slight. Even this can be eliminated by telling the class as a whole that a dollar or so more is needed. In this way, students lacking the necessary money can still participate, and those who need such learning most are enabled to benefit from it.

Each school will have some regulations regarding field trips—whether or not school buses may be used, how long students may be away from school, what costs may be covered by student contributions. The new teacher should be certain to study basic school policies before planning field trips.

Precautions

The wise teacher takes himself on the contemplated field trip before making any suggestion to the students. He will then have seen at first hand the administrative and other problems that are likely to arise. If students overlook some vital point in their planning through sheer lack of experience, he will be able to suggest further checking. He will also have thought of an alternative if, for any reason, the field trip can not be taken.

The field trip is a significant means of improving public relations. The teacher will therefore want to be sure that the students observe the amenities when requesting permission to make a visit. A proper phone call, polite note, or personal visit should be carefully planned in advance. A preview of the proper address in telephoning might very well be a class exercise. It is amazing how few adolescents know the adult forms of requesting a favor. A letter asking for permission to visit might be submitted to the whole class for approval, providing a real-life demonstration of correct letter-writing that would not soon be forgotten. If the field study involves interviewing, a practice interview might be tried and procedures criticized by the group. The thank-you message is equally important. Both students and teachers are prone to overlook this. Yet on just such small courtesies—or lack of them—the community may judge the school. Their neglect may even contribute to the defeat of tax proposals and bond issues.

Some teachers find it helpful to have a check list on permanent display in front of the room when field studies are in progress. As each essential activity is accomplished, it is checked off. Thus no important items are overlooked. Such a check list might include the following:

<i>Item</i>	<i>Person Responsible</i>	<i>Date to Be Accomplished</i>
1. Transportation arranged		
2. Request letter written		
3. Preliminary visit		
4. Principal's permission obtained		
.		
8. Thank-you letter written		
9. Resource file card completed		

Field trips are enjoyed by students. They lend color and life to the content of instruction. They show that what is learned in the classroom is closely related to everyday activities. With some thought, and with faith in the ability of students to take mature responsibility for their own affairs, every teacher can use field trips in his field of instruction.

Resource Visitors

The use of visitors in the high school classroom is probably more common than almost any other method of using community resources. Some community workers make numerous trips to schools as a regular part of their work. Police chiefs, probation officers, traffic court judges, fire chiefs, health officers, directors of recreation, all recognize the importance of informing future citizens about the kind of community service they perform. There is a certain glamour about seeing and hearing the police chief in person; he is both more formidable, and also more human, than the students anticipate. The law becomes more than just "Thou shalt not . . ." In the same way, many of the lessons of science, mathematics, foreign language, history, and English are enlivened through resource visitors. Often they can say to the class things the teacher cannot say, are believed when the teacher may be doubted, are able to inspire young people when the familiar schoolma'am goes unheeded. In addition, the resource visitor often has special knowledge, as of a foreign country, or a special expertness, as in building roads or directing criminal investigations or administering relief programs, that the average teacher cannot hope to have. And thus the vision and knowledge of the students are enlarged. Knowledge that such people live in his area inspires the young person to take more interest and pride in his own community, gives him goals for which to strive as a maturing adult, shows him in flesh and blood the complexity and fascination of this modern world.

However, for all that the resource visitor brings, he can be an utter failure. Understandably, teachers may then become cynical about using resource visitors at all. Yet the fault as often as not lies with the teacher and his students. Few visitors are in touch with adolescents; they do not know much about them, their interests,

ideas, or level of understanding. We invite into our classrooms those people who are successful in their own sphere, but this very success may place a barrier between them and high school students. Many experts cannot share their expertness without using language that may be so much mumbo jumbo to the boys and girls in the secondary school. Sometimes the teacher may have to interview such persons himself and transmit the special knowledge to the students. Prior to inviting an expert, teachers and students should make his acquaintance; if this is not feasible, at least his ability to interest students should be checked with other members of the faculty and with students.

In deciding whether to invite a particular visitor, teachers and students might consider some of the following questions:

Is he interested in adolescents or does he have a negative attitude toward young people? If he feels that high school students are not very admirable young people, his attitude will show when he talks with them. Whatever message he may have will not be conveyed, but his attitude will be.

Does he ordinarily speak in an overly academic fashion? A person who speaks formally, in a complicated and abstruse way, will never be able to drop this manner before a classroom and should not be invited.

Does he ramble and constantly get off the subject? A raconteur may be suitable for a social event, but if certain content is to be covered, this kind of individual is hopeless in the classroom. He cannot be counted on to stick to his subject, and the hour may be lost in a maze of irrelevant comments.

Is he a jokester? While this may keep the class amused for an hour, it will not enlarge the students' knowledge. We do not have to be serious at all times, but if the content is serious, we don't want someone who is merely amusing.

Does he express strong prejudices? It is fine for a person to be convinced that his hobby or job is the best. But sometimes visitors use an audience situation to express pet hates. If these are directed against any group represented in the class, it can be most unfortunate. Moreover, we do not want the class used for propaganda purposes unless both sides can be heard.

Will students confuse him or offend him? It takes an abundance

of poise sometimes to answer the innocent questions of youth. We do not want to expose a community member to such questions unless we know that he can stand up to them with poise and humor. If he gets incensed because young people ask "such dumb questions," then he probably will not make a good visitor.

With these and other questions in mind, teachers and students can interview a prospective resource visitor and be fairly sure of the degree of success he would have with the class.

Many of the speaking faults that are objectionable in a teacher are permissible in a visitor. After all, the students listen to him for a short time only. We can overlook such traits as a nasal voice, odd mannerisms, and ignorance of good public speaking if, in the main, what he has to say to the class is important.

Preparing for the Resource Visitor

Most resource visitors, however, are adequate speakers and are well able to sustain the interest of adolescents. Adults who accept an invitation to speak in a classroom usually are those who have a real interest in education. There are ways the teacher, and the class, can make sure that the visit of a guest speaker is pleasant and profitable for all concerned. Here are some suggestions:

Brief the visitor ahead of time. A list of student questions can be composed by a student committee and presented to the visitor. Probably the questions should be presented personally, since the visitor at that time can review the questions with the students and make sure that he understands students' interests.

Prepare the introduction. When the student or teacher introduces the visitor to the class, he should make it clear that the visitor will speak for ten minutes, or whatever the time allotted, and then will answer questions. Stating the time period to the visitor with the class as audience is a kind of gentle blackmail. It takes a rugged individualist to overlook this kind of time limit. Often a visitor is more aware of a student chairman than of another adult and more likely to comply with his requests.

Request permission to interrupt. Either the teacher or the student chairman can ask the visitor, with the class as audience, if it is permissible to interrupt if something doesn't seem clear. This

provides a needed wedge if the speaker rambles, gets boring, or becomes too academic.

List questions on the board. The questions that have been given the speaker previously may be written on the board and the speaker placed so that he and the class can see the list. This keeps the speaker from spending all his time on one question.

Use a group interview. A group of students may be especially interested in the field the visitor is to discuss. The students have read about it and are ready with intelligent and significant questions. Then the visitor and the interviewing group are placed in front of the room and encouraged to proceed as though no audience were present. This prevents the visitor from making speeches and ensures that student questions will be answered.

Prepare the class. In discussing the area on which the visitor is to speak to the class, the teacher or student committee may make a point of raising important issues. The class may then be divided into groups. Each group will write out questions and assign responsibility to students for asking the questions.

Contrary to common opinion, most adolescents are attentive and polite to visitors. Such a break in the classroom routine will usually be greeted by students with interest, appreciation, and commendable behavior.

As a good host always accompanies his guest to the door, so should a teacher. If the teacher cannot leave his classroom, he can have a student host or hostess perform this courtesy. This is especially appreciated by visitors, who may well feel lost in the labyrinth of today's high school.

A letter that expresses appreciation for the visit should be part of the planning. A class committee can be empowered to frame such a letter. The teacher might well add a personal note indicating appreciation for the visit. The typical visitor is a busy person who has taken time under pressure to make this visit. He will be more likely to agree to come again if he knows that his efforts were appreciated.

Should the visitor be evaluated by the class? If he is good, this is obviously a fine idea; but what if he is not good? He may be related to any number of students in the class, who will promptly run home and tell their parents, "You know, Uncle Joe came to class and we all voted he was just awful." Everything considered, it is

probably better to review with the class the important things learned from the visitor, even though he may have fallen short of expectations. We cannot expect young people to respect adults unless we express that respect ourselves. On the other hand, we must not lose sight of the adolescent's quick penetration of the shoddy or pretentious. To protect future groups, the teacher will want to enter in his resource file a note about the effectiveness of any visitor. If the file is open to students, however, this note should be diplomatic. Uncomplimentary remarks must not find their way into community gossip channels to the detriment of good school-community relations.

Parents and Recent Graduates as Resource Visitors

Up to this point the discussion of resource visitors has assumed a somewhat limited contribution to the class—someone who can present purely verbal information. It may be useful, therefore, to take a broader definition of resource personnel. For example, a class might want to try some gardening experiments in order to test soil fertility. A parent who knew gardening might work well with such a group of students on this technical problem. The more parents can be brought into the classroom, the more support they will provide for the school program.

A ninth-grade orientation class was finishing a unit on personal problems, one of which had been "getting along with parents." As a final activity, three parents were invited to the class, two of them housewives and one a minister. Each met with a subgroup of the class to talk together about the problems of youth in the home, which the class had previously discussed. The young people were happy to discuss the problems with "real parents" and to get their point of view, while the parents were delighted with the intelligent give-and-take that occurred.

If experts are needed, it is more valuable to use an expert who is the parent of a student in the class or in the school than a community stranger. For one thing the bond between adolescent and parent will be strengthened as the adolescent sees his parent in a new light. When the adolescent sees other adolescents according respect to his parent, his own natural pride in his family is enhanced. The parent "room committee," often used in the elementary grades, would be a very useful adjunct to the high school classroom. Such a committee of parents could help get needed supplies, canvass for magazines,

participate in a paint-up day or clean-up day, sponsor end-of-semester parties, help on field trips.

When the teacher makes up his file of community resources, he may include a file card that covers the parents of his students. Such a card might include the following information:

NAME	
PARENTS' OCCUPATIONS: <i>Mother</i>	<i>Father</i>
SPECIAL INTERESTS OR HOBBIES: <i>Mother</i>	<i>Father</i>
TRAVEL EXPERIENCES: <i>Mother</i>	<i>Father</i>

Another kind of resource visitor is the recent graduate. The experiences and reactions of those who are near the students' own age are often more meaningful and significant than information read in a book. When a class is studying vocations, assessing the value of a high school education, or trying to determine the best course of study to take, a panel of recent graduates can be very helpful. Such graduates can tell students about some of their job-hunting experiences, what they have learned by actual experience in the big world, the problems of home financing and budgeting, the adjustment to college life.

The resource visitor provides a relatively easy method of enriching the content of instruction. The time element is not so much of a barrier as it is for the field trip. With some thought, the teacher can ensure a successful experience.

Community Surveys

The community survey, like the resource visitor, is a means to a variety of exciting experiences. The face-to-face encounter with public

opinion gives the young student more real feeling about current issues and what they mean in everyday living than any class discussion can possibly arouse. As an illustration, checking neighborhoods for unsanitary conditions will leave a lasting impression on future homemakers regarding the importance of home cleanliness. Talking with employers about local employment needs impresses the future worker with his own imminent maturity and the appropriate behaviors he must acquire.

The conducting of a survey requires the total energies of a class for an extended period of time. It is possible that several students can make a small survey of one aspect of community life, but such activity might be more in the nature of field work, or a field assignment. However, the problems and techniques are just as useful for a few students as they would be for the whole class. The advantage of the community survey conducted by the whole class is the opportunity to make use of a variety of talents. Some students can do library research on the background of the problem; others can type and mimeograph the questionnaires; others may do the interviewing. The mathematicians in the class can tabulate the data and analyze it statistically; the artists can present graphic charts to show the data; the photographers can take pictures of typical findings. Such a variety of activities means considerable class planning with the teacher so that time is used efficiently and productively. A time plan for a full-scale community survey worked out by the teacher and the class might look like this:

First Week:

MON. Initiation of survey: student presentation of visitor, motion picture, or other current provocative material. Preliminary discussion of the problem and its sub-problems.

TUES. Class study in selected references or text material.

WED. Reconsideration of problem areas. First designation of committees:

1. Background information: three or four groups.
2. Questionnaire: one group.
3. Sources of information in community: one group.

THURS. Study by groups designated above.

FRI. Reports from groups and plans for further study.

Second Week:

MON. Questionnaire group pretests questionnaire. Rest of class continues study.

TUES. Out-of-class teams assigned. Survey deadline set: all interviews to be completed by following Friday. Interview practice for those who are to use the questionnaire.

WED. Interview practice continued.

THURS. Reports from first interviews. Class evaluates progress.

FRI. Broader aspects of problem studied in text or related references.

Third Week:

MON. Class discussion to formulate major ideas of problem area.

TUES. Quiz: review of material known by class in area.

WED. Reports on progress: questionnaire tabulation begun; groups given assignment for tabulation.

THURS. Maps constructed; preliminary charts and graphs begun; background material written up by groups responsible.

FRI. Class evaluates work to date; reports of groups as above. Group assigned to invite community leaders for final report.

Fourth Week:

MON. Final tabulations: charts and graphs completed.

TUES. Introduction and background sections written. Class reviews.

WED. Class considers data assembled. What are the conclusions?

THURS. Agreement on conclusions. What action is recommended?

FRI. Community leaders invited to hear summary and report.

Fifth Week:

MON. Evaluation of total experience. What would we do differently next time?

TUES. New unit begun.

A time plan like this will, of course, have to be flexible. Often more time is needed for study. In a science class, laboratory periods may continue in class while out-of-class work is mainly concerned with the community survey. An English class may set aside certain class days for practice on skills needed in the conduct of the survey. In a foreign-language class, the survey may become a long-range out-of-class project, with sufficient time devoted in class to keep the group informed and interested. The time plan suggested above involves complete concentration of class time on the survey until completed. Probably it would be wise for a beginning teacher to use a plan such as this one. It is usually too difficult at first to keep track of several different activities at once.

If one group in the class completes its portion of the project ahead of the others, several courses are possible. *First*, let the students work with other groups who have not yet finished. *Second*, assign them responsibility for one of the final phases of the project, such

as inviting community leaders to hear the report. *Third*, allow the students to use class time freely on whatever they wish. Or, *fourth*, let them do preliminary study on the next unit of work. The teacher should have a plan for such students, since there will always be a few who finish anything ahead of time!

Selecting Problems

How can the teacher select a problem for a community survey? The problem area selected should conform to the demands of student interest, practicability, and community mores. It would be unwise, for example, to consider a survey problem to which the students were indifferent, one that required reference material that could not be readily obtained, or one that offended major portions of the community. In addition, the views of the school administrators should be sought. The teacher may find that the administrators themselves do not understand the values of community study and need to be informed and convinced. And in districts where the school and the community have had disagreements, it is wise not to attempt community study until more cordial relations have been established.

The beginning teacher is well advised to try community study with only one class at a time, particularly during the first few years of teaching in a new community. The teacher should select the class with whom he has the best rapport, the class that seems most responsible and responsive. This does not mean that he should use his "best" class—or his "slowest." Sometimes we hear arguments that only the most intelligent profit from community study, or, just the opposite, that only the slow student needs concrete experiences of this kind. Both arguments are fallacious. Community study is valuable for all kinds of students. For this reason, the teacher will want to choose a class, not on the basis of fastest or slowest learning, but on the basis of work habits and teacher-student relationship. Although teachers find community study very rewarding, it would be an impossible task to have five classes engaged in it at once.

Interviewing

Much of the success of a community survey depends on the way students are able to conduct themselves in interviews. Although

some community surveys involve merely observation of community facilities and no contact with adults, most surveys do entail talking with community members. The average adolescent is not very skillful in this particular area, nor is the typical adult! The teacher can use interview-training to develop many insights about human relations in addition to skill in the gathering of information.

As soon as the students have agreed that it will be necessary to do some interviewing, the teacher can set up some short and illuminating role-playing episodes. (See Chapter 9 for directions on role-playing.) One student, for example, who has lived in a different part of the country, might be the person being interviewed. The object of the interview would be to obtain his opinions about this locality. Three class members might be the interviewers, being called on one at a time to obtain the needed information. The teacher might designate someone to act as secretary for the person being interviewed in order to cut short interviews that go on too long. It is almost certain that the three different interviewers will obtain three different sets of information, particularly if the student being interviewed is instructed not to give any information unless asked. Out of such a role-playing situation, the teacher can then move into a class discussion of the following points:

What information is desired from the interview? It is valuable to have a list of two or three lead questions so that each interviewer obtains similar material. This will focus the task of the students. A group may be given the job of listing the kinds of questions to be asked in the interviews.

What should be worn to the interview? The careless dress of the adolescent is often the despair of the teacher. Actually, the high school boy (less usually the girl) sees no particular reason for dressing in a very neat fashion. Yet in many of the areas where young people seek work, a good appearance is vital. Thus, in discussing what should be worn in interviewing for a community survey, other attitudes can be built.

How will rapport be established in the interview? The key steps will have to be stressed: State who you are, why you are there, what information you would like, what you intend to do with the information.

Should notes be taken during the interview? An analysis of the person being interviewed and of the purpose of the interview are

relevant in order to answer this question. Most high school students will need careful coaching in the need for accuracy and objectivity in reporting the results of interviews.

How should the interviewer behave during the interview? The interviewer should never argue with the person being interviewed. An attitude of interest should be demonstrated by leaning forward in the chair, listening, not interrupting, nodding to encourage the speaker to continue.

When should the interview be terminated? The interviewer should be aware of the cues of the person being interviewed indicating that he would like to close the interview. Set a moderate time limit for the interview and observe the limit set. Be sure to be appreciative of the assistance of the person interviewed, even when the information is not all that was desired. A graceful exit and a warm "thank you" are very important aspects of a good interview.

What should be done about disagreeable situations? Students should be given protection against possible unpleasant occurrences in interview studies: People who slam the door in the face of the student; individuals who use the occasion to attack the schools; persons who get angry or annoyed at the questions. By role-playing a few such disagreeable incidents, students will learn objectivity and some methods of dealing with this kind of situation.

How can interview experience be shared? After a few class members have made some interviews, reports to the class on their progress are very valuable. Other students gain security and learn techniques.

Should the interview be conducted by one or by two students? It is usually desirable to have students interview in teams of two. The students support each other, particularly if they are nervous or uneasy. One student can remember something the other may forget; thus, each can check the other's impressions.

Some teachers use actual interviews before the class to demonstrate techniques.

In helping a group of new students in a ninth-grade orientation class, the teacher planned with the students to interview several teachers and student leaders. A list was made of those to be interviewed, and two students were assigned to get in touch with one person on the list and arrange for class time. Then, when the individual came to the class, the two team members conducted an "interview" with the class as observers. After the planned interview ended, the rest of the class joined in, asking questions not covered

by the team. After each such experience, a brief evaluation of the technique of the team was conducted. By the end of a few weeks, the students were becoming very skillful in interviewing.

A significant value of the interview experience is the carry-over into the vocational interview. If students have had extensive community-study experience, they have learned how to conduct themselves with poise and assurance in the crucial job-application interviews that face them later. This experience in interviewing may compensate for some lack of job experience.

Using Questionnaires

A good questionnaire requires considerable thought and planning. For the kind of community survey that a high school class ordinarily conducts, the questionnaire will hardly be the elaborate, scientifically tested instrument of the trained social scientist. Nevertheless, the teacher will want to make sure that the students obtain fairly valid and fairly reliable data. Otherwise, the whole experience may produce either unwarranted faith or complete cynicism about questionnaire studies. We live in a world of statistics, yet the average citizen knows little about how they are derived or how applicable they may be. The high school, as its contribution to intelligent living in a modern world, must equip young people with understanding of data-gathering techniques. The making of a questionnaire should be a group undertaking, based on as careful study as possible.

In developing a questionnaire, the teacher and the class will want to have the purposes of the survey clearly in mind. Then every question can be clearly related to a purpose of the survey.

Purpose

Questions

1. To determine reading interests of adults in our town. What do people read, and where do they get their reading material?

- a. Newspapers
- b. Books
- c. Magazines

- a. What newspaper do you read? What part of the paper do you read? What part do you like best? (And so on.)

It may be found that the purposes that seemed desirable cannot be achieved through a questionnaire. Either the questionnaire will

get too bulky and unmanageable, or it will not reveal the kind of data sought. Having a permanent statement of the purposes of the total survey against which to check each technique used is very valuable in keeping the group focused on the problem at hand. Then the teacher can say, "Do we need to ask that question? To what purpose does it relate?"

Questionnaires should be organized in terms of the usability of the data. Very often the questions asked in a survey are highly interesting and important, but when the time comes to tabulate the replies, it is almost impossible to find what the consensus was. Questions should, therefore, be focused carefully. On the other hand, questions that are too simple and obvious will provide meaningless results.

Since a class survey of a community will often be based primarily on a questionnaire, whether it is used for interview purposes or mailed out to be filled in by individuals and groups, it is important that the teacher help students understand how a good questionnaire is developed. The pretest is a vital part of this development. It is considered best practice to pretest the questionnaire on a few individuals who resemble the ones who are eventually to constitute the sample group. Thus, if one is interested in high school students' attitude toward community recreational facilities, then the pretest might include administering the questionnaire to twenty or thirty high school students, tabulating the results, and finding out whether the answers to the questions are adequate for the purposes of the study.

In the pretest situation, the instructions that will be used should also be tried: "Please answer the following questions as briefly and quickly as possible . . ." etc. Often the instructions themselves are unclear. The pretest group can give its reactions to the instructions. The time needed for the fastest and slowest to fill out the questionnaire should be checked. When using a questionnaire, it is important to be able to tell the individuals responding with confidence, "This will take only ten minutes to complete." After the questionnaire has been completed by the pretest group, the respondents should be asked to give any comments or suggestions about the questionnaire. Were there any ambiguous questions? Were some questions too long? Were some important questions omitted? Was it easy to answer? And so on.

In devising a questionnaire, these typical errors should be avoided:

Loaded questions—"Do you think the community should enforce quarantine of people with communicable diseases?" (Obviously, everyone will answer yes—no one would dream of taking the negative on such a question.)

Questions with two negatives—"Is it not true that most adolescents today are no worse than a generation ago?" (A yes and a no answer to this could easily mean the same thing.)

Invading taboo areas. Questions regarding religion, income, attitudes toward sex instruction, and so on, are very often taboo. Individuals will not give opinions or answers and will be offended at being asked.

Asking for respondents' names. It is usually best to keep questionnaire responses anonymous in this kind of community study. Sometimes signed questionnaires are used in social research, but with a high school group it is probably best to use questionnaire techniques that do not require identifying responses by individuals.

By tabulating the pretest, students often find that the tentative form of the questionnaire does not lend itself to easy tabulation. For example:

<i>Poor</i>	<i>Good</i>
1. What do you do after school? 2. Do you go to playgrounds? Yes ——— No ——— 3. What playground do you go to? 4. What do you like to do best at the playground?	1. What do you do after school? Check the following: 1. Go home ——— 2. Go to job ——— 3. Play on playground ——— (And so on.) 2. What playground do you go to? 1. Central ——— 2. Emerson ——— 3. High ——— (And so on.) 3. What are your favorite activities at the playground? 1. Baseball ——— 2. Tennis ——— 3. Swimming ——— (And so on.)

When questions are aligned on the page so that tabulation may be made from one side only, the possibilities for error are decreased.

Tabulation forms that make cross-checks possible are also helpful in eliminating errors.

The use of the questionnaire in the survey provides an extensive opportunity to cooperate with other members of the school faculty. The mathematics instructor can be called on to help in the statistical analysis. As a matter of fact, many mathematics courses might be greatly enhanced if community surveys were part of the instruction. The art instructor can help set up colorful charts and graphs, give instruction in lettering techniques, act as consultant for bulletin board displays, illustrate the findings of the survey. The science instructor or photography specialist on the staff can help the students in taking pictures, and in enlarging and mounting them. The shop instructor can help in making models of various aspects of the community, in making relief maps, in building exhibits. Of course, beginning teachers must work slowly and carefully to get this kind of cooperation. Fellow teachers cannot be drafted; they must volunteer.

Using Guided Observations

Studying the community may take the form of guided observations whose purpose is to increase understanding of some community phenomenon. A class group, for example, may make a block survey to learn how many single-family dwellings there are compared with multiple-family dwellings. The next step may be to analyze the findings in relation to recreational and educational facilities. Another group may focus on the location of businesses and industrial plants. Traffic counts and observation of the flow of traffic may be part of a safety campaign. Observation as an integral part of nature study should not, of course, be forgotten. In family-life education observing children at play to develop insight into different behavior patterns is tremendously useful.

The general procedures of the community survey apply to guided observations. Purposes must be established. The questions that underly the inquiry must be brought into focus. Background research must be undertaken to place the data gathered in proper perspective. A form to guide observation must be developed by teacher and students. Practice in making observations is essential to gathering valid data. Finally, a critical and extensive examination

of the data gathered should lead toward better insights and understandings.

The guided observation is often a more easily used tool than the interview or questionnaire in community study. The observation does not imply any contact with adults or other community agencies. There is less chance for adolescents to make mistakes that redound to the discredit of the school. Although we do not choose educational practices merely because they are "safe," it is common sense to select those methods that are most likely to produce genuine learning with least hazard. A beginning teacher particularly should be guided by such considerations.

Some Warnings about Community Surveys

The community survey is an excellent educational resource, but the teacher should be aware of some of the pitfalls. For one thing, the students may report data inaccurately. If these data are circulated in the community, someone will protest. Students may not know what is important and what is not, and very often will include much that an adult would discard. Students may also fail to distinguish between fact and fancy. Often the chief value of a survey is to show the students how careful one must be in judging from inadequate or superficial evidence. The teacher will need to be careful about what aspects of a survey are reported back to the community. Sometimes it is wise not to publicize the findings of a study, since the community leaders may misjudge the student effort. On the other hand, in the effort to be wholly accurate, the teacher may put too many rigid limits on the survey, and its genuine educational value will be lost. The students will then be engaged only in a mechanical kind of activity that they do not understand and that has no meaning for them. The margin for error is large where students have a great role to play in the planning. But it is just this margin that makes for the richest kind of learning. The teacher could probably set up a very adequate survey, but, if he does it for the students, they will be cheated out of a very important learning experience.

Publicity for survey findings should be carefully considered. The students will often get very enthusiastic about their study, particularly if it is controversial or startling. This attitude is the beginning

of citizenship responsibility and is something to be fostered and prized. But a whole school program can be endangered by one bad mistake in facts, or one distorted quotation. When the report is finished, trusted "friends of the school" could well be brought in to discuss the findings with the class and then, in consultation with the teacher, help determine whether the report merits further community publicity. If so, the local newspaper is almost invariably cooperative in publishing student findings.

During the course of the interviewing, it is important that the teacher discuss with the class the ethical approach to information received. It is doubtful that students will be given much confidential information, but any kind of survey may uncover some material that, if broadcast, could injure some person or program. Thus, the teacher will find it advantageous to have general class agreement about the ethics of revealing social survey findings without proper clearance.

Service Projects

One element of the community school often discussed in theory but rarely carried out in practice is the obligation to provide service to the community. In preceding sections of this chapter it can be clearly seen that the school is utilizing community resources to further the learning of young people, but it is often either incidental or accidental that the community itself benefits from what is done. Developing responsibility in young people means helping them acquire a sense of obligation to society. The idea of "me first" is unfortunately ingrained through much class instruction. Each student works and is evaluated only as an individual; hence, he is concerned only with what *he* gets out of it. Such an attitude restricts the development of broader community concern and may in part account for the apathy with which so many young people view the events of the world around them. By involving young people in community service projects during their school career, a community conscience may be created in students. Moreover, through such projects, students learn more about ways in which communities do need the energy and talent of their citizens.

Typical service projects are of two kinds: those that develop out of the curriculum and those that are extracurricular. These may be further subdivided into those that serve the school community and those that serve the larger adult community. Here are some examples of school-community programs that provide an avenue for student service:

Working with adults can be a traumatic—or rewarding—experience for both the young people and the adults. In one town, a School-Community Citizenship Council has proved to be of value to the community and an educational experience for all. Adults and adolescents have worked together to solve problems of the local community and to aid the school program.³

The junior and senior girls in a home economics class perform both kinds of community service; they volunteer their services to elementary teachers for a specified period, and they also help out where families in the community need home care. For instance, a teacher may ask them to help decorate a room, designing and making curtains. Or they may help supervise the mid-morning milk period, prepare a tea for new mothers, conduct health surveys among the children. In the community the girls are available to help in the home if the mother has been taken ill, to make dolls for sick children, to provide entertainment for mothers of different classes.⁴

The senior commercial students studying office practice render a useful service to the teachers: whenever a teacher needs a stencil cut and run, typing done, and other clerical services, the students, under their own student Chief Clerk, perform the task. In this way the students not only learn the problems of managing flow of work in an office, but are performing a worth-while task for the school that might otherwise not get done.⁵

An English class became interested in the lost art of storytelling. One girl reported how cleverly her mother made up stories to tell the younger children at home, so much so that neighbor children dropped in to hear them. The girls in the class became interested in learning how to tell stories and then going to the various playgrounds for a story hour. After considerable community exploration, which was taken by the boys

³ Nicholas Econopouly, "A School-Community Citizenship Council," *Social Education*, 20:63-64, February 1956.

⁴ Educational Policies Commission, *Learning the Ways of Democracy* (Washington, D. C.: National Educational Association, 1940), p. 131.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 130.

as their responsibility, the cooperation of the recreation department was secured. Some visits from the library storyteller were arranged. The class work then became a project in finding good stories to retell and also writing new ones. Even the boys were interested. They had quickly decided that most of the stories were "too sissy." At this the girls challenged them to get better ones. The class divided into story-writing groups. Out of it came a series of very imaginative and original stories for young people. The girls of the class have found the playground work most satisfying and enjoyable.

The Spanish Club suspected that the Mexican-American mothers in the community felt left out of many community affairs because of their inability to speak English adequately. The club decided to hold a series of mothers' teas for this group in their own neighborhood and frankly made the purpose of the teas to help these mothers feel more at ease in English-speaking situations.

Once a school builds a reputation for providing community service, it is relatively easy to find abundant outlets for the energy and talent of the students. Churches, civic organizations, and city officials often have many problems of community welfare that, with the help of volunteers, could be met more effectively. Some surveys of community opinion, for example, might help a city decide whether or not it was feasible to call for an election on a new bond issue for expanded recreational facilities, or whether such an election needed more community discussion. If the school district has to conduct a school census in order to determine needs for new facilities, properly trained students can do the job adequately. There are innumerable problems that arise, once the teacher is alert to see them. However, are all such service projects worth student time? Care is needed to avoid work on trivial or merely glamorous projects; to steer clear of projects that are identified with special-interest groups; to stay away from projects that are purely exploitive of student time and contribute very little to their educational experience.

Furthermore, the teacher will want to work closely with his school administrator and, even more important, with community leaders to create an atmosphere of genuine community teamwork. Using community citizens as planning-committee members for all service projects helps to ensure community acceptance of the young people, their efforts, successes, and failures, and also protects the

school from adverse criticism of favoritism or undue interference in community affairs.

It is difficult to see that a school may be guilty of an excess of zeal in performing community service at this time, since the error has been so gross in the opposite direction. Community service is so rare and so slight when performed that teachers need constant encouragement and assurance in going boldly into this area. The rewards in terms of enhanced social learning and increased student maturity are considerable.

SUMMARY

The community is all around and about the school. It influences the way students feel and behave. It is a resource for many aspects of teaching. It is the arena in which adolescents will, as adults, act out their lives.

In summarizing the material presented here, let us read thoughtfully a statement by Hunt and Metcalf in a recent volume on education:

Community resources, like textbooks or classroom motion pictures, are tools and not learning ends in themselves. They are aids to conceptualization and are of no educational value unless they help a student reach useful generalizations. Forgetting this fact is one of the common weaknesses of modern education. A field trip or listening to a community speaker tends to degenerate into "something to do." If a community resource is to be of maximum value, it must become a part of intellectual processes which are being nourished through classroom discussion and study.⁶

The teacher who has discovered the rich resources of a community will find himself and the students continually challenged and stimulated by new experiences. It is as important for the mental health of the teacher as it is for that of the students that learning be satisfying and various. The community can certainly be a source of unlimited problems, procedures, outcomes, and ideas. But working with a community requires imagination and sensitivity on the part

⁶ Maurice P. Hunt and Lawrence E. Metcalf, *Teaching High School Social Studies* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956), p. 391.

of the teacher. He must guide students wisely as they first begin with community interviews; he must prepare them carefully to receive a resource visitor; he must be ready for any emergency when he embarks on a field trip or excursion. Finding significant community service projects can become one of the central contributions a teacher can make to the citizenship education of young people; but again, care in selecting such projects and close cooperation with school officials and community leaders is essential to the continuing success of this kind of program.

Community resources are an aid in furthering the large aims of education. Any such aid, when it becomes an end in itself, loses its value and becomes just so much busywork, albeit somewhat more interesting busywork than other forms that teachers may devise. Such a rich resource, and such an important and significant one in the total life of the student, should be used with care, with precision—but it should be used!

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Discussion, Role-Playing and Related Techniques

THE TERM “activity school” was coined to describe the new kind of school that John Dewey’s early followers produced. In these schools the predominant idea was freedom to learn. Some schools, indeed, made activity an end in itself, and modern educators have been living down the sad results of this kind of misinterpretation of Dewey ever since. But the fundamental idea that learning is an *active* process has been substantiated by observation and research in countless classrooms. If the learner sits and lets knowledge flow over him, like water over a rock, nothing is going to happen to him. It is only when a genuine interaction takes place between the learner and the “stuff” of education that any observable change occurs. By interaction we do not mean merely running around. We mean the activity that occurs when thinking occurs; when facts are sought, weighed, sorted, ranked; when generalizations, conclusions, and solutions are proposed. How then can we ensure such interaction?

In the following chapters we shall present several important classroom techniques designed to bring the learner into a more active

role in his own learning. These techniques are problem-solving class discussion, role-playing, and allied techniques; small-group work; classroom games and other review and drill procedures.

This chapter will describe the pattern of class discussion and the utilization of role-playing. The succeeding two chapters will cover the other topics noted.

Classroom Discussion

There are many times when the teacher wishes to treat the class as a whole group, to develop in each student a desire to discuss common problems. For even the experienced teacher this procedure demands special skill. How can he help all the students feel part of a group inquiry?

First, he must select a problem that is really "common" to students, not just "common" to teachers. Second, he must be convinced that the problem selected can best be attacked by thinking aloud. Thinking aloud together is a kind of learning experience that is uniquely valuable. Ideas often become more meaningful to students when they must chew them over, defend them, modify them, explain them to others. As they struggle to frame concepts in their own words, the implications of the problems presented become personalized, for they have committed themselves publicly before their peers. In such joint thinking, individual errors in judgment have to be revised. Each is encouraged to contribute his little bit of knowledge or experience to make up a more accurate total picture. Alternatives not known to any one person come to light as others speak out. Students learn to express ideas so that they are understandable and persuasive while still "conversational" in tone and language (a most important skill to the adult in his social world). A tolerance for a wider point of view than that held by students' own provincial groups is acquired.

In terms of learning, the concept verbalized, however haltingly, is usually more lasting than the unvoiced concept. This kind of verbalizing is not memorizing, but actual reworking of ideas to the point where the student can express the essential in his own fashion.

In this manner, a whole group works together so that while each shares in the common solution of the problem, the achievement also belongs to each individual in his own fashion.

What Is Discussion?

The teacher's role in the development of good discussion is tremendously important; it is all too easy to prevent any real thinking. We might start with a consideration of what discussion is *not*. Suppose we listen to this history class:

TEACHER: We have a real problem to discuss today. I wonder how many of you have thought about why we have an electoral college.

GEORGE: Because people in those days hadn't done much voting.

TEACHER: Well, that is not exactly right.

JOHN: Because someone suggested the idea and no one could think of a better reason.

TEACHER: No. Can anyone give us the real reason?

SUSAN: Did it have anything to do with transportation?

TEACHER: Now let's not guess. This is a real problem. Can't we discuss it?

MARY: I think it was because the leaders didn't want the people to vote for president.

TEACHER: Now you are getting on the right track; any other good reasons?

This exchange is really little more than a guessing game. The teacher suggested a problem which in reality is no problem. Real problems for discussion must have several equally plausible solutions, each of which needs careful examination if the most fitting is to be found. The history "problem" to which we listened had one "right" answer. The students were trying to figure out what, in the teacher's mind, this "right" answer was. There was no group thinking; in fact, it was not *group* activity at all.

Much classroom recitation is completely sterile because students drag out a miscellany of uncertainly memorized and unrelated facts. Certainly we need facts when an issue is at stake. *But the issue comes first*. Then facts must be chosen for their relevance. Judgment, not merely memory, becomes important. Discussion is *not* recitation.

Before we proceed, we might list some other things discussion is *not*:

It is *not* just talking by people who know little and care less about the subject being discussed.

It is *not* a debate in which different factions try to "win" by fair means or foul, completely disregarding right and wrong.

It is *not* an opportunity for one or two to show off how much they know while everyone else listens in bored silence.

What is a genuine discussion? Let's listen to a discussion in another classroom:

TEACHER: We have a real problem to talk about today. There has been much discussion recently about abolishing the electoral college. What do you think about it?

GEORGE: Well, I think it has outlived its usefulness.

TEACHER: That is a good point, but John, would you agree with George?

JOHN: No—not entirely—uh—after all, the electoral college is part of our traditions, and in these times I think we should keep to our traditions, instead of doing away with them.

SUSAN: Well, but John, if something isn't useful anymore, why should we keep on doing it? After all, if you had a car, you wouldn't keep on riding a horse and buggy just because your grandfather did it!

MARY: But the people must have had some good reasons for putting in the electoral college.

GEORGE: Except the only trouble is those reasons never worked. Don't you remember when we were reading about the—what was it?—Convention—Constitutional Convention, I think—

TEACHER: Let's see, John, there seem to be two sides here. Will you have a try at saying what they are?

Here the teacher has skillfully encouraged some discussion by deliberately asking for student opinion. The students have done the talking—not the teacher. At this first stage in any discussion, the thinking is muddled, but the teacher is careful to keep in the background so that *differences in point of view* can be freely expressed. Students feel that they have a real part to play in seeking good answers, not merely guessing what the teacher considers the "right" answer.

Arguments against Discussion as a Way of Learning

The value of this kind of classroom activity seems beyond question to most educators; yet many classrooms have relatively few

discussions. Why is this? Here are some of the arguments advanced against using the discussion. *First, the discussion takes much more time than the usual recitation.* It is true that a teacher can efficiently summarize the arguments for and against a given point of view and then quickly resolve the difficulty. Whether it is best to save time or to take time must be decided with each problem. Where the exercise of real critical thinking is desired, only taking time for discussion will do. After having really argued through an important problem, the students have moved one more step toward ability to do mature thinking. Moreover, as teachers soon observe, the amount of time taken depends upon the experience of the class. Students who are used to discussion can quickly think through new problem situations as they arise. An inexperienced class will falter and flounder all around the problem in the attempt to think clearly as a group.

The second argument against discussions is that the same students always do all the talking. This objection is valid with groups not used to discussion, since here the leaders are usually unaware of how to distribute participation. Of course, there are always students with greater verbal ability than others. Although these students need a chance to continue to develop this ability, it must not be developed at the expense of others.

Sometimes it is argued that in discussion *the teacher cannot tell exactly how much or what the students have learned.* It is true that some of the outcomes of discussion appear very intangible. How, for example, can growth in critical thinking or ability to express ideas be measured convincingly? The discussion often moves so fast, so the argument goes, that the teacher has all he can do to follow the trend of thought, much less remember whether Johnny was better today than he was in the discussion the week before. But actually, these intangibles can be measured qualitatively. As the teacher becomes skillful in discussion leadership, he needs to give less of his attention to the mere mechanics of leadership and can better distinguish among the *kinds* of contribution made by individuals. As he leads the same class in discussion several times a week, he soon recognizes the roles taken by different students. He notes that a dogmatic, irritating, overconfident student is beginning to depend less upon the loudness with which he expresses a point of view and more upon facts and clear thinking to support his statements.

After helping a class learn the techniques of discussion, the

teacher is able to relinquish the leadership to various students and to take a place at the back of the room to observe individuals as they participate. Then actual notes about the contributions made by individuals can be taken, notes that can later guide the teacher in individual or group instruction.

Teachers often complain that during discussions the class fails to keep to the point. This is the fault as much of the leader as of the group. Inexperienced leaders may assume that one topic is of chief importance, when actually the group has defined another problem, or another aspect of the problem, as of major concern. Thus, "getting off the track" may allow the class to talk about those concepts of real concern to its members. In that way a teacher may learn a great deal about the basic interests of his class. As for "not covering the material," there is *never* enough time to teach all we would like to teach! Teachers must pick and choose content, whatever method they use. Not all subject matter can be discussed, not all of it should be discussed. But some subject matter *ought* to be discussed!

Selecting Discussion Questions

In planning for a discussion in the classroom, the teacher clearly needs something that is controversial, that is not an open-and-shut case. Here is a series of opening questions proposed by a group of teachers as provocative:

1. Do you suppose Beethoven worried about this aspect of harmony?
2. If Congress refuses to pass legislation asked for by the President, what could be done to persuade Congress?
3. Should insurance be carried by everyone?
4. One third of us will die of heart disease. Can we do anything about it?
5. Why did some fish feel compelled to come out of the water and become amphibian? How did it happen? What caused it?
6. Should there be censorship of the quality of network television?
7. Who was the world's first chemist? What do you think he did?
8. What makes up good choral singing?
9. Why do rats have no gall bladder?
10. What important factors should be considered in choosing a vocation?
11. Why should anyone take algebra?
12. Are women healthier than men?

13. *How many of you agree with the statement that a juvenile delinquent is born, not made?*
14. *Do you think the T formation is better than the single wing?*

Which of the questions above do *you* think would interest *you*, assuming you knew something about the subject matter? Sometimes we are startled to realize how essentially dull the "problems" are that we present to young people; and if these problems appear dull to adults, they must be even more so to youngsters.

Each of the questions above suggests some sort of an inquiry. But notice the way in which each is framed. Let us take one example:

How many of you agree with the statement that a juvenile delinquent is born, not made?

What sort of a response will the teacher get? The request is for "how many." Probably the students will just raise their hands if they agree with the statement. Obviously, this reaction will not provoke discussion. The teacher must search for a stimulating question. Suppose he tries again: "How many of you disagree?" Again, a sprinkling of hands. No, another tack must be tried: "Why do you disagree?" Now we have the germ of discussion. From here the students can proceed to analyze one facet of the nature-nurture controversy, a problem that could easily arise in social studies, biology, or English classes.

Perhaps this approach seems roundabout. Does it seem that there ought to be a more direct way of initiating the discussion? A moment's reflection will show that to ask for a clear cut decision on a controversial issue, even before the issue has been discussed, will alarm some students and cause them to doubt their own ability to think. Many students will not have made up their minds about the question as asked. Yet the teacher may assume by his question that each student has already reached a decision. Furthermore, taking sides at the outset should be discouraged, rather than encouraged. Some students will "vote" one way or the other because a friend took that position, or because one of the bright students indicated his opinion. The teacher is thus encouraging superficial habits of thinking.

A more direct approach might have been:

Some people think that juvenile delinquents are born, not made. If some friend of yours got into trouble for stealing, would you say it is his fault, or the fault of society?

Or:

If you had to list the things that contribute to crime among teenagers, what things would you feel come at the head of the list and which come at the bottom?

Or:

Are young people your age really responsible for their own behavior? If they commit crimes such as stealing, should they be punished like adults?

Any of the variations above will strike at essentially the same idea. The important point to observe is that the questions are phrased to provoke interest and to provoke thought. The issue is not black or white. Variations in judgment are expected, and, what is more important, the problem has significance for young people.

Let us examine a few more of these questions. Those that ask for facts, pure and simple, are hardly likely to stir much interest. The students who have the facts will smugly wave their hands, while those who did not read the assignment will sit silent, barely aware of the topic suggested. These questions are:

5. Why did some fish feel compelled to come out of the water and become amphibian? How did it happen? What caused it?
7. Who was the world's first chemist? What do you think he did?
9. Why do rats have no gall bladder?

Other questions on the list require a reporting back of a series of concepts that are not really debatable. These questions are:

1. Do you suppose Beethoven worried about this aspect of harmony?
2. If Congress refuses to pass legislation asked for by the President, what could be done to persuade Congress?
4. One third of us will die of heart disease. Can we do anything about it?

If discussion arises from such questions, it will be only as a result of teacher prodding. Furthermore, the morbid tone of question four is probably not the best approach to use with adolescents.

Some of the questions will provoke undesirable student responses unless very carefully handled. For example:

11. Why should anyone take algebra?
12. Are women healthier than men?

This sort of question is almost too inviting to be overlooked by the classroom clown. Unless the teacher desires a light touch or is prepared for a raucous session, such questions should be avoided.

Questions such as the following are more apt to move a class toward a real discussion:

3. Should insurance be carried by everyone?
6. Should we have censorship of the quality of network television?
14. Do you think the T formation is better than the single wing?

These questions indicate that several good answers are possible. Besides, the problems are currently significant to young people, and have been discussed widely in many other places besides the school. The students may already have encountered various points of view on the controversy in newspapers and current magazines, so that some groundwork is already laid for exchanging ideas.

Criteria for Good Discussion Questions

Out of the preceding analysis, some criteria for good discussion questions may be assembled:

The question implies a genuine interest in divergent points of view. It suggests the existence of differences of opinion and indicates that such differences are respectable.

The question probes an area of experience that is of immediate, as well as more remote, concern to young people. A question including some present-day reference but also by implication embracing more general aspects of the problem will encourage discussion.

Discussion questions imply values and the process of evaluating known facts, rather than a memory search for right facts opposed to wrong facts.

Questions that ask for most, least, best, worst; which would you rather do; is it better to; and the like, encourage a sorting and evaluating process that promotes exchange of knowledge as well as ideas.

The beginning teacher would be well advised to practice the procedure of asking provocative questions.

The tone of voice used by the teacher is important to good

discussion. Not only framing good questions but asking them in a *tone of inquiry* is essential. A dull, bored, sarcastic, or dogmatic tone of voice can kill student expression of opinion, no matter how good the question.

Other Ways of Starting Classroom Discussions

Of course we should not assume that discussions come only out of a teacher-posed question. Discussions emerge from any stimulating activity, whether initiated by the teacher or the students. Any of these materials and resources may be utilized to develop class discussion:

Motion picture or film strip.

Bulletin board displays.

Odd or unusual objects brought to class.

Resource visitors.

Newspaper items.

Pictures.

Local events: school, community, national.

Commemorative days; for example, United Nations Day.

Radio recordings.

In using any of these resources there are a few warnings to be heeded:

The teacher should be alert to the controversial aspects of the resource used. If an unusual object is brought to class, it should be displayed because it will excite curiosity and open an important area of inquiry. It is essential, then, that the teacher preview the material and assess the discussion possibilities of any such resource.

The medium used to promote discussion may itself take all the available time. This is particularly true of motion pictures, visitors, and recordings. If any of these take the whole class period, there will not be time to exploit the interest aroused. The next day may be too late.

The medium used may raise more questions than the teacher is interested in opening for discussion at this time. The teacher may be startled and upset to find the students interested in some other area than he anticipated.

The Discussion Leader

Once the discussion has been started, it is the job of the leader to keep it moving forward toward possible consensus. A discussion may, it is true, have so much vitality that it will continue regardless of anything the leader may or may not do. When students have become accustomed to talking together about live issues in the classroom, there may seem to be no leader at all. In fact, after the class is over, the discussion will rage on, in hall, lunchroom, library, or on the stairs. Certainly it is a sign of good education when students are so consumed with a desire to talk together about important things that discussion continues whether a teacher is present or not. To start this process and keep it moving ahead takes sensitive direction. Let us look at some requirements for leading a discussion.

The Three Roles of the Leader

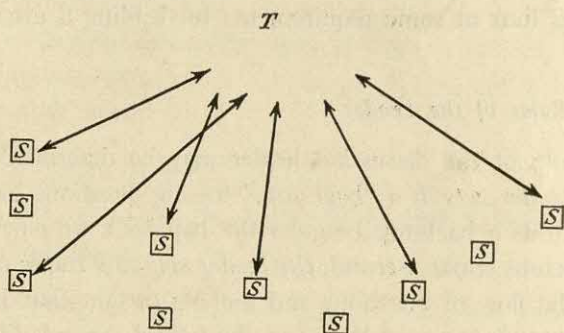
The role of the discussion leader may be described this way. *First, the leader acts as a "backstop,"* tossing questions back to the group much as a backstop bounces the ball back to a person practicing his tennis stroke. *Second, the leader acts as a traffic policeman,* directing the flow of questions and making certain that individuals take their turn in crossing the issue. *And third, he acts like a guide with a road map,* stopping from time to time to show the group the road they have taken—the branches that have been sketched in but abandoned, the wrong turnings, the fork in the road that now approaches—and pointing toward the goal of the journey.

THE LEADER AS BACKSTOP

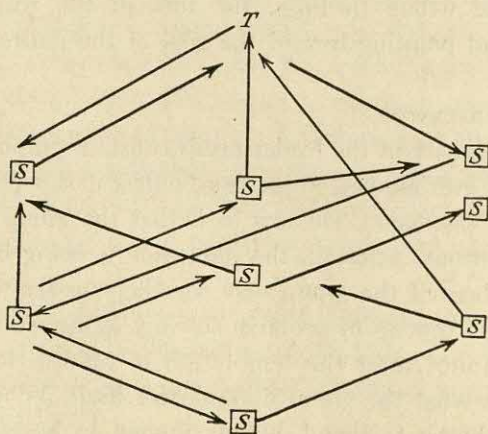
The first activity of the leader needs constant emphasis. A good leader rarely if ever answers a question, unless it is a petty question retarding good discussion. He sees to it that the group answers the important questions. After all, the discussion is being held in order that the members of the group may together answer the questions that arise in the process of problem solving. Many would-be discussion leaders cannot resist the temptation to answer, to explain, to clarify. That is what the group must do for itself. When a student says, "Isn't it better to spend our tax money on hospitals than on

schools?" the teacher should answer, "That is a good question. What do you think about it, Henry?" "Sue, what is your opinion?" or "We haven't heard Jim on this problem yet," or "Donald's father is manager for a local hospital; what do you think, Donald?" Of course, simple matters of fact that are not worth wasting group time on may be answered by the teacher. A question of semantics or a quibble over whether a report is in error or not should not be allowed to impede the process of group thinking.

A cardinal principle of good discussion leadership, and the one that is probably most often ignored, is *to toss all important and vital questions back to the group*. Otherwise, the discussion becomes a series of little conversations between the teacher and members of the class. The discussion pattern which is merely dialogue would look like this:



A picture of participation in a discussion where real group thinking was going on would look more like this:



THE LEADER AS TRAFFIC POLICEMAN

The second role of the leader is that of traffic policeman. He uses his leadership prerogative to direct questions to specific members of the class, to see to it that the more verbose do not dominate the discussion, to keep voices down to a reasonable level, and, finally, to see to it that only one person is speaking at a time. These disciplinary functions are highly important, but must be exercised with care. A leader who pounces on a class as soon as a slight rise in temperature is noted, the moment a voice becomes a bit shrill in argument, or when small bits of conversation spring up in answer to someone's statement, will soon thwart student interest in discussion. A really good discussion is bound to generate some heat. The leader must see to it that this rise in interest does not interfere with logical and productive group thinking, but the restraining hand should be lightly applied. A word of caution, such as, "Now, let's not get *too* excited, yet!" can ease mounting tension and remind the students that after all they are in a classroom, engaged in an intellectual discussion. Similarly, the leader must be alert to guide the discussion toward students who have not as yet contributed, to interrupt—judiciously—those students who tend toward speechmaking, using every bit of knowledge he may have about a student as a method of helping that person make his best contribution. Knowledge of a given student's interests, out-of-class activities, father's or mother's occupations, and travel experiences is very useful when the leader seeks a strand, no matter how tenuous, to weave the interest of a student into the discussion going on around him.

This policeman function, therefore, is not only keeping the traffic of ideas flowing, but seeing that each contributor gets his full share of attention and opportunity to express himself. Student observers, keeping checks on how many times individuals make contributions and the type of contribution each makes, are invaluable assistants to the new teacher. The class also becomes interested in charts of its own discussion. Such reports, treated with objectivity, are among the most effective devices to keep the loquacious students in check. They can for the first time see themselves in perspective and realize without too much ego damage how much more time they have taken of the total allowed the class than they deserve. A participation record, used to encourage those who do not participate

and keep in check those who tend to talk too much, is one of those indirect, group-centered disciplinary devices that will help the new teacher in class control. Such devices will do far more than any teacher's admonition or the even less pleasant prod of a grade.¹

THE LEADER AS DISCUSSION GUIDE

The third major function of the leader is to act as over-all guide for the direction of group discussion. Thinking of a discussion as an unfolding map may clarify the nature of the process. After the first experience of trying to keep thirty or forty lively minds focused on a single problem, we see how rough the going may be. So many ideas are suggested! And for every idea there are at least three objections, complaints, asides, personal comments, or amendments. How does the question asked by Jimmy relate to the remark made by Joan three minutes earlier? Such problems arise every other moment during the course of a lively discussion. Thus, the leader as guide is involved in helping the class perform the various steps in problem solving. Briefly, these steps are as follows:

What is the problem? At this stage, the leader may have recourse to the blackboard. It is useful to get agreement from the whole class at the very outset about the limits of the topic that has sparked the discussion. Then, if an irrelevant comment is offered, the teacher—or other students as they gain in facility—may point to the statement on the board and say, “Is that part of our problem?”

What are the major issues? Here, again, leader and students should use the blackboard to list the things about which there is significant disagreement. Matters of fact need to be listed in a separate column as topics for further research. It may be—and this often occurs—that a discussion must be temporarily suspended at this stage. It is found that what has appeared to be a disagreement is merely difference of opinion about the facts on a given problem. The teacher may then utilize student interest in solving the problem to motivate them to find the answers *in fact* to the questions where apparent disagreement occurs.

What are the possible solutions? As the issues are clarified and as the more important are separated from the less important, the

¹ See Chapter 10 for use of forms for recording participation.

focus of the discussion is on solutions for each major issue. Suggested solutions are then posted on the blackboard. Again, additional research may be called for to determine whether a given solution is feasible.

What are the consequences of possible solutions? The test of feasibility must be applied. Can the proposed solutions work? Are they in accord with what we know about human beings and society and the physical world? At this stage, proposed lines of action or syntheses of arguments are discarded, and those the class as a whole finds agreeable are chosen.

What consensus is reached? In a real discussion it is usually both unnecessary and undesirable to have a vote. With sufficient participation by the group the leader can usually tell when general agreement has been reached. Constant voting on each point would be both a waste of time and a useless interruption. In this last stage of discussion, where the sense of the group is finally attained, there is a feeling of satisfaction and relief. The leader may step in to summarize and point out where the group has traveled in its thinking.

What action is planned? This stage is not always reached. Where a discussion involves merely an intellectual exchange of somewhat abstract ideas or general principles, no action is likely to occur. However, if a discussion starts on a topic such as "What play should the seniors choose for the last school assembly?" then some plans for action should result. Sometimes committees are selected to carry out the plan. Other outcomes may be writing a letter to the local Congressman, preparing a skit for a PTA meeting, or preparing a plan for study for the succeeding six weeks.

These steps in the process of group thinking constitute the fundamental structure of problem solving. As the leader becomes accustomed to thinking in this sequence himself, he finds it relatively easy to help others to do so. As an aid to logical thinking, the leader can make explicit which step the class is approaching. He can say, for example, "We must define our problem before we go on to discuss where and how we disagree," as the class approaches the first step; or, as the group edges around the second step, "Now let's be sure we know what the issues are in this problem before we try to find out what a good solution would be."

As a road guide, the leader can also assist in the appraisal of contributions. When a student makes a suggestion that is supposed to be pertinent, the leader will want to ask, "Now is that your opinion, or is that a fact?" so that the difference between what is true and what is believed or felt becomes clear in the minds of the students. Moreover, the source of information is significant: a student contribution may be more or less reliable, depending upon his source of information. Developing a critical use of standard sources of information is a major result of learning. Did the newspaper report the event accurately? Why does this paper's report differ from the one in this magazine? How did the radio and television report the same event? Such questions will develop out of discussion when the leader directs attention to the quality of individual contributions. As students gain facility in discussions, they will learn to discriminate among authorities, to think objectively rather than emotionally about facts, and to modify opinions in the face of sound logic.

Finally, the teacher or student leader of discussion, in his role as guide, is interested in keeping the group moving toward its goal. "Needling" the group to sharpen its thinking, getting it back on the right track, challenging it to new ideas when the discussion seems to be bogging down, are all part of the art of leadership. To serve these purposes, a series of questions or queries may sometimes be formulated prior to the discussion by the leader. Obviously, these stimulants should be administered judiciously lest the leader get too far ahead of group thinking. It is important to check frequently with the group by means of such remarks as, "Do we all know what the point under discussion is?" or, "Was that last issue clear to everyone?" before moving on to newer fields. The leader may find that while the interest and vitality of a few keep a discussion moving swiftly forward, a good portion of the class has lost the thread of the argument several twists back. A group with widely differing intellectual abilities is likely to make the faster students impatient, or move too quickly for the slower ones. A teacher may want to use some of the small-group techniques outlined in Chapter 10 in order to raise the skill level of the whole group, impressing particularly upon those who think most quickly that waiting until the

slower ones catch up is essential to democratic group thinking. This does not mean, however, that creative individual thinking is to be discouraged.

Personal Qualities for Discussion Leaders

To carry out the roles of the leader as a backstop, a traffic policeman, and a road guide, some special personal qualities are needed:

A personal and lively interest in the subject under discussion. Good leaders do not try to promote a discussion about topics they find boring or dull. Excitement generated by the leader is contagious and will help enliven a classroom group. Choosing for leaders those students with a more-than-usual interest in the subject will also help to promote student discussion.

An open mind about the outcomes or the pattern to be taken by the discussion. Group thinking changes as groups change. Whereas one class arrived at one decision, another class may arrive at an opposite one. When choices are to be made, it is not wise to have a personal stake in any one choice; this is likely to spoil the quality of leadership. Students soon descend to the guessing-game level of participation under this kind of leadership.

A sense of the humorous as well as a sense of the serious. Being able to shift from low gear to high, from the light to the heavy and back again, is essential to the art of leadership. Ability to laugh at the unexpected remark or retort will keep young people with the leader in the more serious parts.

A real interest in the opinions of young people. Some adults enjoy discussions with other adults, but become bored when youngsters express naive, bigoted, or ignorant ideas. Discussion does not flower in this sort of atmosphere.

An ability to suppress the expression of his own opinion most of the time. Students are quick to detect what the leader thinks is the correct point of view unless the leader is skillful at summarizing both sides of an issue impartially. As rapport is established, the leader may use the assertion of an opinion to encourage disagreement. However, this technique should be used carefully.

Jacques Barzun has described very vividly the role of discussion on the college level; much of what he says is just as appropriate for the high school discussion leader:

Handling a discussion group requires a special talent. . . . The hour's discussion must not go off in all directions like a leaky hose. It must have a pattern, beginning at a given point and logically reaching another, from which to start again the next day. Now it is relatively easy to impose a pattern on a lecture; the scheme of it can be written out beforehand and even memorized, because no one will interfere with it. But in a discussion, every one of twenty-five or thirty men has a right to shove the tiller in any direction he pleases. Since there must be an atmosphere of freedom, the instructor must not act like a priggish moderator with a gavel. He must be willing to go up sidetracks and come back. His imagination must swarm with connecting links, factual illustrations, answers to unexpected questions. He must, moreover, know how to correct without wounding, contradict without discouraging, coax along without coddling. Every once in a while, a group of men will contain a crank or a fanatic: he must be turned to good teaching use without being made to feel a goat. Every once in a while, the class will want to take the bit in its teeth and hold a political or ethical debate, none too close to the issue. This must be tolerated. Every once in a while, the instructor will feel so strongly on a given matter that he will want to lecture. This must be nipped in the bud.

An advanced discussion group . . . is a test of any discussion leader. His role is that of an orchestra conductor, except that neither he nor his men have a score before them. Yet the result of the evening's noise must be as intelligible as a symphony. This takes mutual accustoming on the part of leader and led. Calling on the right man for the right thing, balancing opinions, drawing out the shy and backward, keeping silent so that the group itself will unwind its own errors . . . is an art that only comes with long practice. It calls for the best teachers in their prime and I am convinced furthermore that it accomplishes more than any other form of teaching.²

The teacher will seek to develop his own skill in leading discussions, but all that has been said here should be passed on to students in order that they too may become more skilled in thinking through problems cooperatively and giving leadership to such endeavors. The more the teacher is able to let student leaders preside

² Jacques Barzun, *Teacher in America* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1945), pp. 40-41.

during appropriate discussion periods, the greater will be the opportunity for students to gain in poise, responsibility, and maturity of reflective thinking.

Controversial Issues: What Can One Discuss?

On some issues in our culture there is such grave divergence of opinion about right and wrong that merely to bring them up for discussion is to arouse violent emotions in the participants. It is often felt that areas of such strong public and personal reaction are not suitable for our schools, since the process of education ought to be based on fact and objective truth.

We know that what is controversial in one part of the country may be taken as a matter of course in another part. It is possible in some sections, for example, to discuss interracial relations and do much to develop greater understanding. But in many sections such a discussion would disturb community groups and lead to serious criticism of the teacher. Similarly, study and discussion of such topics as unions, local political problems, communism, historical bases of religion, evolution, and divorce will be likely to upset some communities. Should the teacher avoid such issues? Most of the questions we have mentioned are in the realm of the social sciences, but obviously there are controversial issues in every field of study. Any teacher who encourages discussion may find himself teetering on the edge of a controversy.

Controversial issues may arise whenever subject matter is concerned with contemporary events. Even a mathematics class, in discussing statistics and percentage problems, may bump into a topic such as, "What is a fair rate of return on a capital investment?" Obviously this is a controversial subject in the minds of many people. Yet current problems are important in any curriculum where young people are being encouraged to think critically about the modern world.

Many teachers are understandably wary of allowing classroom discussion to veer off into these "controversial issues." They fear that

community opinion will not approve; that they will be accused of being "radical" or "immoral" or of putting the wrong ideas in the minds of youth; and that fear brings visions of dismissal. Or teachers may fear that students will start expressing ideas that are inappropriate, getting into areas where the teacher himself feels uneasy because the problems are unresolved. As a result, many teachers keep their courses on the dull and even keel of dry facts, uninspiring recitation, and memorizing. Actually, the alternatives need not be so sharply drawn. It is possible for most teachers to engage in classroom discussion of some controversial issues. Of course, teachers who are biased, who are untactful and undiplomatic, will run into difficulties in this field just as they would in any situation that demanded mature appraisal.

Some criteria may be suggested here to guide the teacher in the choice of those controversial issues that ought to be discussed in classrooms:³

Is this issue of significance to your students now? What is of concern to adults may not be important to young people, and perhaps ought not to be important to them until they grow into maturity. Let us not foist all of our perplexities upon youth!

Is this issue one that students may be able to understand? The special ideas and even the vocabulary of some problem areas may be too far outside the realm of experience of your students.

If the issue interests the students, is it possible for them to seek additional information to answer the kinds of questions they may raise? It is unwise to open up debate upon a question of importance in order to encourage young people to get the facts, and then not have sources of information from which facts may be obtained. Those issues that have no factual solution whatsoever are often merely frustrating for the whole class.

Will this problem, if discussed in class, help or hinder the long-run aims of the school in this community? The teacher may feel very strongly about a problem, which, however, a given community is not yet ready to face. If such a problem is discussed in the class and the community objects, the teacher may have done basic damage to any further education along such lines in this community.

³ Adapted from Junior Town Meeting League, *Teaching Controversial Issues* (Columbus, Ohio: The League, 1948).

Finding Areas of Interest

One of the broad purposes of education is to provoke thinking. Unfortunately, this purpose cannot be accomplished without irritating some people. But being capable of irritation is, after all, a sign of life. We would encourage all teachers to examine carefully the material they intend to teach and seek those controversial issues that meet the criteria we have suggested. This is not an easy task. Many subjects, such as music, art, science, mathematics, languages, do not seem on the surface to include any controversial issues. However, it is possible to make a beginning of a list here and let each student, in his own subject field, continue it for himself:

Art:

Who should say what is good art? The people, who are untrained, or the artists, or the critics?

Advertising is not really art.

Only good art should be studied in schools, since we see so much bad art outside of school.

A great artist must also be a great person.

Music:

Jazz is very superficial music and therefore should not be studied in school.

Modern music, like modern art, does not seem to make sense. People should sing for their own enjoyment, not to uplift others.

Mathematics:

Geometry should be required of all students, no matter what they intend doing in adult life.

Science could not advance without mathematics, but mathematics can advance without science.

We should adopt the metric system rather than retaining our present English system of measurement.

Science:

Atomic energy research should be controlled by private industry rather than by government.

There should be international regulation of all work in atomic energy.

There is no such thing as a "clean" atomic bomb.
The scientist need not be concerned with politics.

Social studies:

Divorce laws should be made more stringent.

If Americans had been more patient, the American Revolution need never have been fought. We would have been farther along the road to world peace had this been true.

The voting age should be lowered to eighteen in all elections.

Avoiding Common Errors in Discussing Controversial Issues

Although the teacher should be alert to the usefulness of arousing discussion in areas of controversy, he will, of course, run into trouble if he is unfair to any particular point of view. The teacher must himself have an open and unprejudiced mind, since the students in his class may represent all shades of opinion and attitude. The teacher must give a fair hearing to all points of view. Then, if criticism arises, he can point out that the democratic process insists on an "open market place for ideas." Obviously, the teacher should beware of needlessly stepping on toes. If he is not, he becomes a Don Quixote, tilting with ideological or personal windmills, and his long-run effectiveness is lost in a maze of recrimination and suspicion.

The discussion of controversial issues, or of any important subject, for that matter, has one special hazard for the beginning teacher—the embarrassing question.

Mr. Doyle was finishing a unit on racial tolerance. There had been much lively discussion, and students had been very interested. He felt that it had been a highly constructive experience all around. The film *Americans All*, from the "March of Time" series, had been chosen as a kind of summary of the democratic point of view. There were a few moments of class time left after the motion picture, and discussion was somewhat desultory. The group was pretty well talked out on the subject. Then Philip, who could usually be counted on to provide a jolt to the group, raised his hand: "Mr. Doyle, would you marry someone who wasn't of your race?"

What happens next? This is the kind of question that teachers fear, some of them so much that they will not risk raising the issues

at all. Yet there are always ways to handle these questions. Here are two ways in which Mr. Doyle might have replied:

"Well, Philip, I think that is a very important question. Frankly, I don't have an answer to it. I would like to give you a good answer, and not just the first thing that pops into my head. Let me think about the problem, will you, and then perhaps we can come to an understanding of it."

"That is a serious question you raise, Philip. It is asked by many people whenever this subject is discussed. I think I know what I would do, but before I give you my opinion, I would be interested in hearing what other members of the class think."

Oh, you say, the teacher is just stalling for time. Yes, the teacher is asking for more time; he is trying to arrange his ideas so that he can give a reasoned answer, a response that cannot be misinterpreted. The motives of students who ask these questions may be suspect, but the issue still needs to be faced. The teacher cannot allow himself to become confused or upset. Here is the moment when clear thinking is needed most. Yet the atmosphere is so charged with emotion that it is often most difficult to think clearly. So the teacher should be ready to turn the discussion back to the class, while both he and they work out their thinking. There is great wisdom in not answering immediately. Admitting that a pat answer is not at hand may be the most convincing evidence of honesty.

We admit, then, that there will be many uncomfortable moments for the teacher whose class discusses controversial issues. But we need to remember this:

A majority of people end their formal school period on or before graduation from high school. Therefore, if the majority of our pupils are ever to consider and discuss controversial issues under conditions which normally exist in the schoolroom, this must be done during the high school period.

An individual may best be inducted into a consideration of controversial issues under conditions prevailing in a public school classroom. Here partisanship and propaganda are much less in evidence than outside the classroom, and scientific techniques of attack on social, political, and economic problems are not only used but their uses are likewise taught.⁴

⁴ Educational Policies Commission, *Learning the Ways of Democracy* (Washington, D. C.: National Education Association, 1940), p. 367.

Indeed, in democracy there must be a marked emphasis on freedom to discuss controversial subjects. As the Educational Policies Commission has stated:

Freedom of discussion of controversial subjects is more than a right. It is a requisite of democratic institutions and democratic ways of living. In a democracy, public policy is ultimately determined by the will of the people. To deny the right of consideration of controversial questions to any portion of the people, or to place any question outside the pale of free discussion, is to strike at the heart of democratic institutions.⁵

Role-Playing and Related Techniques

When we were all very young we used to play "Let's Pretend," and forthwith produced fascinating versions of school, family, cowboys, historical stories. This play-acting can be seen among all young children; an observer may often gain new insights into the child's view of the world by hearing a group of four-year-olds "play house." The "mother" will discipline the "children" much as these children are actually disciplined; the father's role emerges according to the view the child has of his father—sometimes rather different from that of the adult in question! Not only do the observers learn about the child's world, but the child is going through an interesting learning experience; he is trying out the various real-life or fantasy-life characters that he sees or dreams about. By pretending to be a fireman, the child learns a great deal about what it is actually like to be a fireman. Dramatic play of this sort, both creative and realistic, is utilized in elementary schools to provide teachers with insight and to develop on the part of the young people a new dimension for learning.

The technique applied to the high school class is also a useful device, serving similar purposes. We call the technique "role-playing" when we are concerned mainly with the development of deeper understanding of social relations. The technique is called "psychodrama" when it refers to the deeper personal-emotional problems

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 171.

encountered by the individual in his own life. The latter technique is used mainly by therapists and psychologists and should be used only by those trained in dealing with deep emotional problems. For the high school teacher, role-playing is the more appropriate tool.

Role-playing is unprepared, unrehearsed dramatization. A class discussion may be focused on the issue, "If the United States has a surplus of food, to which country should it go and under what terms?" The teacher may assign some members of the class the problem of portraying the role of spokesmen for various countries in need of food, while other students represent United States officials. Then these "pretend diplomats" meet to present their points of view. By the time the role-playing is finished, the teacher has gained insight into (1) how meaningful the subject matter was to the young people; (2) what concepts they had developed about foreign viewpoints; and (3) how well the individual student could relate subject matter to the real people involved.

Role-playing may be used to portray the students' version of the dramatic moments from a book that is being read in class. The book may concern historical figures, may be biography or autobiography, may be in a foreign language. Some teachers have had students give their own version of Shakespeare's plays spontaneously, thus gaining an idea of what elements of the story remain in the students' minds. Sometimes current events may be portrayed in "live" action—some local controversy over taxation, some debate in Congress over foreign policy, some conflict in the United Nations over China. One very effective use of role-playing has been in the development of democratic attitudes toward people of minority groups. Here students take the roles of these people in their daily lives in order to gain greater understanding and appreciation of their problems.

Role-playing differs from the usual type of dramatic work in that no script is needed, no memorizing of parts, no rehearsal. In fact, the value of role-playing as a teaching device lies in the spontaneity of presentation. The action comes directly from the individual's creative use of his own experience.

There are only three prerequisites for good classroom role-playing: (1) the class should have a cooperative group feeling and a common interest in the issue at hand; (2) the participants should

have the issue clearly in mind; and (3) the experience should be regarded as a means of learning, not entertaining. The following specific examples will show how the technique can be used:

In a United States history class, the material being studied had to do with George Washington's selection as the first President. After reading the text and having a brief discussion about it, the teacher asked one student to be George Washington and two students to be the committee who called upon him to ask his acceptance of the nomination. At first the students were unable to portray the roles, but after further class discussion as to how George Washington actually would have felt and would have answered, after consideration of the appropriate arguments that might have worked, the little drama was re-enacted to the satisfaction of the class. Here can be seen one of the prime uses of the technique: making remote and fairly abstract situations come alive in the present-day moment for young people.

A journalism class was discussing interview techniques. In order to make the lesson clear, the class described various kinds of persons one might interview: the highhanded celebrity, the sobbing mother, the tough politician, the frightened child, the garrulous gossip. Then members of the class practiced different interview approaches to each situation. The discussions after each presentation often resulted in a replaying of the interview, with different performers trying different techniques. The teacher discovered that some students had more insight than others into how real people act, and that those with less insight learned a great deal by having to think through the problems presented.

A group of music teachers felt the need for variety of activities in their classes as a means of solving problems of discipline. Among the new techniques that were suggested and used with success was role-playing. One teacher reported that prior to the visit of a noted pianist, some episodes from his life were read to the class from an article in a current music periodical. The teacher then asked: "What episode was most interesting and dramatic? Could we re-enact it as it must have occurred? Who would like to be the pianist? What about the other characters?" The class response was very rewarding; music and musicians took on new life.

The specific steps to be taken in initiating role-playing are described below. These steps are merely suggested. After one or two tries, the teacher probably will want to alter or adapt them to suit his own situation.

Selecting the situation. The situation should, first, be a fairly simple one, involving one main idea or issue. Second, the situation should be one involving personalities. The issues should be those that arise because people have different desires, beliefs, hopes, and aspirations; or they should be problems that arise from the inability of people to understand the point of view of others. When introducing this technique for the first time, the teacher should have an idea for a role-playing situation clearly in mind. Later, the class members will be eager to describe situations of their own choosing and select the roles that should be taken. Situations that require from two to four characters are easiest to begin with. Larger numbers are confusing until students know more about what they are supposed to do.

The teacher, with the help of the class, should describe each of the roles to be taken. As an illustration, suppose the role-playing concerns the problem of incorporation of an agricultural community. Opinion is divided; to some residents the increased services do not seem sufficient to counterbalance the increased tax load; to other residents, incorporation offers distinct advantages. A petition is being circulated. The role-playing then revolves around the various characters that might be concerned with such a problem. Farmer Jones is selected as one role to be portrayed. The essential details of his role are sketched in: he is married, has lived in the area about fifteen years, and has never made very much money—just enough to live nicely. Other details may be added as appropriate: he is stubborn; or he is a sharp bargainer; or he is very slow and ignorant. After one portrayal, the teacher and the class will learn how much description of each role is necessary. Then the teacher and the class should set the situation: Mr. Jones is visiting Mr. Smith in order to get his signature on the petition, or Mr. Jones has come to ask Mr. Smith's advice about the local controversy.

Choosing participants. When first trying out role-playing, the teacher should select students who are fairly well informed about the issue to be presented, and who are imaginative, articulate, and self-assured. The show-off often freezes up or clowns absurdly; the shy student feels insecure and inadequate. Both types can be assisted in their own personality adjustment by first being given minor prop roles, such as that of secretary or doorman, and later being allowed

to take larger roles. It will also be found that those with dramatic training are not necessarily the best participants in spontaneous dramatics, since role-playing draws upon the individual's own resources of feeling and imagination.

It would probably be advisable not to ask for volunteers for role-playing until the students are familiar with the activity themselves. In selecting participants, the teacher should make use of his knowledge of each student's background and needs, placing the student in roles and situations which will be of benefit to him and in which he will be comfortable.

Setting the stage. When the participants have been selected, they should be sent out of the room or to some quiet corner for about two minutes. They should be instructed to "think themselves into" the role they are to take. The participants may want to decide together how the scene will look, where the furniture will be, who will enter first, and other details of staging. Later, the class as a whole may describe the complete setting before the participants are selected.

Preparing the audience. While the participants are out of the room for their two minutes of thinking, the teacher should direct the class to observe the action as though each one were acting in it. The students should ask themselves: Is this the way these people act and feel in real life? The students should be concerned with how a housewife would act and what she would say when defending her interest in sentimental romance, rather than how Harriet Smith acted as the housewife.

The exploratory nature of role-playing should be clear to both the participants and the audience. It should be understood that no finished product is expected, but that, in fact, everyone will learn more if the participants are considerably less than perfect.

Acting out the situation. When directing role-playing the teacher becomes a cross between director and audience. When a student seems to be slipping out of his role, the teacher should remind him of what he is trying to do. When the students seem to reach a dead end, the teacher should cut the situation short. However, the teacher should otherwise allow the action to follow its own pattern as completely as possible, since this very naturalness, the feeling of freedom to become wholly involved in the situation, con-

tributes immeasurably to the reality and the success of the experience. Few role-playing episodes will last more than five minutes, unless the situation is very complicated or the students have a great deal of information.

Follow-up. When the situation is finished, the class will be eager with comments. This stimulation of discussion, centering on how people feel and why they act as they do, is one of the basic contributions of role-playing. The students may have so many ideas for a re-enactment of the situation that it may be appropriate to go through it again with new actors. On the other hand, the students may feel that more knowledge is necessary before trying again and may want to do more reading and study about the personalities involved. This outcome, of course, is most desirable, and the alert teacher will make the most of his opportunity.

The participants should report how they felt as they acted through the role-playing. Their feelings will provide the teacher with a clue to the students' insight into the wellsprings of human emotion.

In the follow-up, as in the preparatory period, the teacher should always stress that no one is expected to do a perfect job in role-playing. He should make a point of expressing pleasure at how well the students have succeeded in the task. Role-playing can, in this manner, be an effective learning medium, providing both students and teachers an opportunity for joint creative experience.

Now we are ready for an illustration of a complete role-playing activity.

There had been much concern in this school about intergroup relations. Some covert conflict seemed to exist between the Spanish-American group and the other students. The English teacher, Mrs. Morgan, felt that some dramatic enactment of a related situation might help clarify the immediate school problem. At the start of one class she announced that they were going to try a new kind of dramatics; they would make up a play as they went along and see how it worked. She then presented the "plot" to the class:

The son of one of the leading ranchers in the area, Sidney Stuart, had been killed during World War II while serving as a Marine in the South Pacific. In memory of his son, Mr. Stuart said he would like to award annually a \$50 prize to the student in the school who was considered the best citizen by a student committee. The first year the award was made, the committee, composed of George Green,

Doris Bacigalupi, and Tony Nevin, chose Bill Thompson. Bill did very good schoolwork, was one of the track stars of the school, and just the previous semester had, at great personal risk, saved a whole family from disaster. Bill was a Negro. When Mr. Stuart heard who had been given the first award he was furious. He told the principal that under no circumstances could he agree to the award being given to a Negro student. "Isn't there a white student who is a good citizen?" he asked. He said he would even give another \$50 award and let Bill keep the one he was to get. The principal, Mr. Jenkins, agreed to call the student committee back together again and explain Mr. Stuart's position.

The role-playing took up at this point. Students were selected for the various roles, and the "committee" met with the "principal." The members of the first committee were assigned specific roles by Mrs. Morgan. The student to play George Green was told to take the position that Mr. Stuart was right, that another award should be selected and then they could have two awards. The student who played Doris felt that this was absolutely wrong and was opposed to a second award. The student who played Tony carried the burden of the committee decision. The class listened to the description of the situation, and then, after the role assignments had been given, there was marked rise in interest and alertness. This problem assumed reality, and everyone leaned forward to see what the "committee" would work out with the "principal."

The committee carried on a rather extensive argument with the principal. The students playing the roles found it difficult to reach agreement. The principal seemed to favor Mr. Stuart's proposal. The meeting finally was called to a close by the principal, who suggested that they think it over until the next day, since they obviously were having difficulty in reaching a decision.

At this point, when Mrs. Morgan turned to the rest of the class for their reaction, there was an immediate hubbub of comment. Mrs. Morgan merely waited, without saying a word. One by one students started to voice their opinion of what they had seen. One student finally stated that he knew what he would have done if he had been the principal. This sounded like a good idea to Mrs. Morgan, so she called him up to be the principal, quickly picked a new committee from the class members, and they went through a new sequence. As the new principal worked toward his solution, which was not a very ethical one, the teacher turned herself into a secretary and announced that Mr. Stuart was waiting to see him. Without warning she called one of the class members up to be Mr. Stuart. Then a new situation evolved, with Mr. Stuart reacting to the proposal of the principal. This discussion grew quite heated as the student playing Mr. Stuart flung himself into the role of a highly prejudiced person. The teacher felt enough had been said and, again being

the secretary, told the principal that he was wanted on the telephone. Then the role-playing ended for the time being.

A lively discussion ensued. The students by this time were very deeply involved in the problem. Two major ethical points had emerged, one regarding attitudes of tolerance, and one regarding the justification of a lie. The lie had been the last principal's solution, which then became the focus of class discussion. By the end of the period, the teacher felt that the groundwork had been laid for a follow-up discussion the next day regarding tolerance and understanding of others. Eventually she hoped to open up the immediate school problem of understanding and working with the Spanish-American students in the school.⁶

If a teacher is alert to student reactions, there can be a very rich role-playing experience. In the example, the teacher captured a student idea regarding a solution and "tried it out." By seeing their suggestions in practice, the students gained a deeper insight into reality.

Other situations are given to illustrate the kind that are possible in high school classrooms:

Jean Talbott is an eighteen-year-old girl who was very close to her parents until she overheard them discussing her boyfriend, Ted Green, and discovered that they didn't care for him at all. Jean is very fond of Ted, who has asked her to marry him when she finishes school next summer, and she finds she must either reconcile her parents to Ted or make the decision to marry him against their wishes.

The young people in a small community have started a youth group. They meet for a few weeks at a local church. Even the minister agrees that social dancing is an appropriate activity for them, but because of local tradition, he does not feel free to have them dance at the church. Lacking any other meeting place, the young people decide to approach the high school principal for the use of the local school building after hours. The principal is responsible to a tough school board, which includes church members.

Ted works for his father on the farm. He knows that the war years have been the first financially easy ones his parents have ever had, and that every penny of the family is accounted for in advance. He gets a moderate allowance from the profits, but, since he last year chose the farm as his life work, he feels that some more businesslike arrangements should have been made with his father. For example, he may want some-

⁶ Problem situation adapted from unpublished material of George Shafstel and Fannie Shafstel.

time to marry or to have a car of his own when he can afford it. Right now both seem impossible. He does need more allowance, however, because he has a girl he's known for a long time and whom he's just asked to go steady.

Larry has been working hard to become financially independent of his parents by raising and selling some livestock of his own. While he is having a late breakfast with his father and mother on Sunday morning, a hot-tempered neighbor storms in to accuse Larry of letting a bull get out and destroy his vegetable garden. Neither Larry nor his parents have even met the neighbor, who keeps vicious dogs around his place and discourages visitors of any kind.

Since finishing high school, John Rowan has worked with his father at farming. The family is well enough off, and John has been thinking for a year or so about going to college. He could take agriculture, but lately he's thought he might like to be a veterinarian, or, perhaps, a rural sociologist. He is an only child, and his parents have always thought of him as wanting to stay at home. John's father, too, hasn't much patience with college education for farmers and is supremely happy that John seems never to have mentioned wanting to go away from home. With John's help, now, Mr. Rowan is sure that he can take it easier around the farm. Finally, John can just take over, but that will not be for some time.

Bruce Schaeffer and his wife Mary are both interested in leadership jobs in their rural community. They want to begin by organizing not only the young people but the parents into some community recreation. A major problem is how to approach all the different religious and cultural groups (each with different attitudes) in the town. Many difficulties are encountered in getting all these groups working together. Parents are harder to bring together than the young people.⁷

There are a number of variations on the technique of role-playing, which the teacher will soon discover for himself. Teachers who are interested in trying this method might do well to form a small group and run through some role-playing of their own in order to know how it feels. Teacher-principal, teacher-parent, teacher-student problems are fitting subjects for such practice. An experience in role-playing is the best way of discovering what this method accomplishes for the participants.

The use of role-playing has been found particularly effective

⁷ H. W. Harshfield and J. P. Schmidt, *Playing Out Our Problems in Socio-drama* (Columbus: Ohio State University Agricultural Extension Service, 1948).

when the role has immediate carry-over into real-life situations. For example, when developing the idea of working in a group, the teacher can use role-playing to show the class how different people assist or impede the process of group thinking.

A teacher had been concerned about some of the group projects in her class. Several of the groups were working very well together, but in two groups there was dissension, due to dominating leadership as well as disagreement over what the group was trying to do. Therefore, at the beginning of one class hour, the teacher said that she was going to ask several members of the class to be a "pretend" group. She called up five students and gave each a separate slip of paper, cautioning them not to tell anyone what was on the paper. The slips were as follows:

1. You are very eager to be chairman of the group.
2. You don't like anything that is suggested.
3. You are very enthusiastic about almost any project suggested.
4. You refuse to take sides in a discussion.
5. You are eager to see the group working together on almost anything.

She then asked the students to pretend that they were a group similar to one in class and gave them a project to plan that paralleled those being worked on. The students threw themselves into the roles with great vigor, to the amusement and chagrin of various of the class members who saw their own group roles being portrayed. After about ten minutes, when it was obvious the group wasn't getting very far, the teacher called the group to a halt and then threw the problem open to the class to discuss. She started by asking them to identify the roles each person had taken.

If individuals have developed inadequate or difficult personal roles for themselves, role-playing may help them find a more adequate pattern of behavior.

Role-playing is especially useful in any situation where various kinds of leadership are being evaluated. A teacher who is the adviser to the student council may have to aid the president of the student body in appropriate behavior. The president may need help in developing ability to be fairly assertive, poised, able to interrupt long-winded speeches, turn aside provocative comments, encourage and praise. By acting out some of the typical experiences in presiding, the president may become better equipped to carry out his responsibilities. Similarly, a team captain may be able to work out appropriate

ways of encouraging the members of the team. In sessions of role-playing, a sympathetic audience can say, "Bill, you shouldn't be so sharp when you tell Joe about his mistakes." Or, "I think, Bill, you might try another kind of comment when George hogs the ball." Then Bill can try out a few different phrases or comments and see whether the group feels that these are better ways of working with the team members.

Role-playing can often be used in guidance. A group of boys, for example, may be unable to participate in social affairs because they completely fear the tête-à-tête situation with a girl. Role-playing some typical boy-girl situations may help such a group develop confidence. Sometimes it is desirable to have a visitor act the girl's role, since it may be difficult to have a student do so without feeling embarrassed. The boys then try out how they would ask "her" for a date, what they might say at a dance, how they would make a graceful exit at the end of the party, and other crucial moments in social relations. This kind of role-playing may be preceded by make-believe telephone conversations to a girl. The telephone-conversation situation is most appropriate for role-playing because it is such a common problem situation for adolescents.

Teachers who have made much use of role-playing find that it improves if frequent evaluation periods are held. One history teacher assigned portions of the textbook chapter to groups of two or three to enact. After each series of enactments, an evaluation committee reported on how well the episodes were presented, and suggested improvements for next time. From the committee came suggestions such as these: "Don't turn your back on the audience"; "Make clear to the group just what each person is supposed to represent"; "Don't giggle or act silly"; "It helps when something exciting is selected." These provided impetus toward doing a better job next time. Through constant encouragement to improve, the students learned discrimination besides gaining in poise and freedom in front of a group.

Sometimes the role-playing group is requested to summarize in writing the main principle that it hopes to project. Then the group has a definite focus. The principle is not announced in advance, of course, but the audience is alerted to its responsibility to capture

the major idea. A brief quiz after a series of role-playing experiences can be used to show how well each group made its point. The success of the groups in projecting concepts may furnish guides for continued training in selecting problems for role-playing.

Writing Skits, Radio Scripts, and Plays

In role-playing, the classroom teacher has a very simple but effective tool with which to build some original and dramatic presentations. Such presentations require carefully planned and detailed scripts, but the informal role-playing helps get the scripts moving.

An assignment had been given to try to write a simple one-act play. One student chose the scene in which Anne Boleyn says farewell to her daughter just before she (Anne) is to be beheaded. The student asked various class members to take the few roles needed and to ad-lib the parts. The students, after a quick briefing, threw themselves with a will into the scene. The conversation that ensued had the breath of real life in it. As a result, the student playwright had the basic structure of her play set up, and also obtained some important clues about how people might interact in a crisis like this.

This technique is applicable in almost any situation where a script or playlet is to be written. Radio scripts provide good motivation for writing in classes where writing is not the primary aim. They can be easily tape-recorded and played back to the class, and local radio stations can sometimes be persuaded to use the better efforts.

A journalism teacher had taken her class on a field trip to a newspaper plant. When they returned, the teacher suggested a follow-up activity involving the preparation and recording of a script describing the field trip and what was learned. The class divided into groups: one group were the experts, to check the script written by the writers for accuracy of facts and scientific soundness; another group, the sound engineers, arranged for the recording equipment and studio; another provided background music and sound effects; and still another became the critics to see that the whole thing was an effective presentation and could be used for PTA, assembly, and other journalism classrooms.

The idea of the "living newspaper," in which a group of individuals trained in role-playing techniques act out current happen-

ings for an audience, may also be readily adapted to the school assembly program. For this, too, preparation of the script requires a minimum of technical skill.

Conversation Periods

Adults spend more time conversing with others than in any other kind of oral communication. The ability to carry on an interesting, logical, informative, and enjoyable conversation is therefore a valuable asset in social situations. To develop this skill, some teachers have several students who are prepared on a given topic put on a "conversation" for the class. Some principles of good conversation can thus be illustrated. The class sees that a conversation is an informal talking together about something of interest to the participants. It becomes clear that good conversation depends on rapid give-and-take of ideas rather than on prolonged speech-making, and that it utilizes humor as well as serious argument. Students also observe how sensitive conversation is to personality interaction.

Conversation as a teaching device in developing oral skills tends to reduce fear of an audience, since it simulates a situation familiar to most students and emphasizes natural behavior and relaxation. Students who can learn to converse in front of a group will soon be able to stand up alone and give an informative and enjoyable talk. Learning conversational skills prior to beginning with panel discussions may also improve the quality of the latter.⁸

Use of These Techniques by Beginning Teachers

When should the teacher use these more dramatic teaching techniques? This question will be raised often by the beginning teacher. There seem to be so many different ways of presenting material—how can the teacher know which to use when? The techniques described in this section—role-playing, script-writing, and conversation periods—may best be used when the teacher is fully assured of class control. Sometimes the freedom implicit in these devices is

⁸ Lucien Kinney and Katharine Dresden, *Better Learning through Current Materials* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1949), p. 35.

too much for students who are accustomed to more rigid methods. The teacher will want to develop the idea of using this approach with the class and assess the students' readiness to try something new. The teacher himself will want to have some experience in the techniques. Beginning teachers would do well to try them out with fellow beginners when no students are present. Some of the problems and possibilities can be realized only through active participation and cannot be adequately experienced merely by reading about them.

SUMMARY

Efficient learning requires genuine interaction between the learner and the content of education. No high school student retains long the learning handed him by others. To harried beginning teachers it may seem to save time to organize learning for the student and deliver it to him in a concise lecture. But research is adamant on this point. Learning that is not reworked, reshaped, rediscovered by the learner never becomes a part of him and soon washes away.

In this chapter, discussion, role-playing, and allied techniques have been presented as effective ways to encourage active participation by students. Discussion is sometimes not used as a means of learning because it appears to take so much time; because the same students always seem to do the talking; and because it is difficult to measure the amount of learning. Actually, discussion may, in the end, save time, and, with the right kind of leadership, participation can be distributed and the kind of learning measured.

The use of discussion inevitably involves the teacher in controversial issues. Most controversial issues can and should be discussed in the classroom, although each community will undoubtedly have its own taboos. The decision to discuss or not to discuss should be resolved on the basis of what promotes best the long-term aims of the school in the community. Thus, the kind of issue that can or cannot be discussed will vary considerably from community to community. In any community it does not take extraordinary perception to discover the tender spots, but no community prohibits discussion of all controversial issues by its teachers. As the Educational Policies

Commission says: "Freedom of discussion of controversial subjects is more than a right. It is a requisite of democratic institutions and democratic ways of living."

Like discussion, role-playing ensures active student participation. Role-playing invites students to act out the roles of people in the social world. After a social-relations problem has been posed, students take their parts without rehearsal or script. Each tries to feel, act, and talk as he imagines the real-life participants would. In this way, the teacher can determine how meaningful the content was, how well it has been related to the problems of real people, and what values the student holds about human relations.

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Group Techniques in the Classroom

It had been a very lively discussion. Many hands had been raised. Ideas pro and con were listed on the board. Mrs. Jackson felt quite pleased with the quality of the thinking that had been displayed. She had only one small nagging doubt. Although the discussion had been lively, she remembered that Alice had made quite a few of the suggestions. Virginia had made some. But Sue and Tony and Jack had not said anything. And George, while nodding earnestly from time to time, also had been silent. How many others had been unresponsive?

As the discussion closed, finally, Mrs. Jackson's doubts could no longer be silenced.

"We have had a very good discussion," she said, "and many people have contributed. Or I think many people have. I wonder if you will be quite frank with me. Will all of you who participated put up your hands? I just want to know how many really took part in the discussion."

A scattering of hands went up. Mrs. Jackson quickly counted them. Thirteen. There were thirty-six in the class. Two were absent. That meant that thirteen out of thirty-four students had carried the "lively discussion." What had happened to the other twenty-one? Were they interested? Did they agree or disagree? What did they think? Were they thinking at all?

Mrs. Jackson thanked the class and went on with the business at hand. But she could not help feeling somewhat let down, just a bit cheated, and concerned as well. The questions above remained unanswered and disturbing.

COMPARABLE SITUATIONS could be reported in many high school classes. Although the discussion procedures described in the preceding chapter encourage some spread in participation, they do not typically involve *all* students. Often, involvement of the whole class is desirable. Is it possible? In recent years we have made considerable progress in our knowledge about the personal-social climate in which learning is encouraged or discouraged. We have learned that the small-group setting gives the best promise of involving every individual. In this chapter, we will discuss the group within the larger class. The small-group activity, with its many variations, may help solve the problem posed by Mrs. Jackson and echoed by many of her colleagues.

Is a Class a Group?

The literature of education abounds with phrases such as these: "The class then decided . . .," "The class then began the next phase, which was to . . ." Let us examine these phrases for a moment. The usual class in the junior or senior high school contains about thirty-three students. Most classes are together for fifty-minute periods; then the students are reshuffled as they proceed to the next class period. Another thirty-three students, including some new faces and some from the previous class, then convene for quite different instruction. Are these classes genuine "groups"? Can we talk about a class of thirty-three actually "deciding" anything?

It is difficult for thirty-three adolescents who meet for only a short time daily to acquire true group identity. For the most part, it takes long periods of working together to gain this sense of "belonging." Many of you reading this book have lived in a sorority or fraternity or in a dormitory. For some of you, this kind of group

living extended over several years. Others who have not had this experience may have enjoyed group living in summer camps. Wherever the group living took place, you saw your peers in many different situations, and shared with them all kinds of internal and external crises as well as the more pedestrian, everyday problems. This sharing created a genuine feeling of being part of a group. And the warmth and security and fun of it may be one of the richest memories you retain. Contrast this with the classroom experience of students in high schools. The emphasis is on each person's accomplishing his own task—usually, a task set by the teacher. There is little room for sharing the job to be done, for helping or being helped. In fact, on many tasks the least interaction among students is often correlated with the best kind of classroom. Surely this does not develop group feeling!

Group identity can be developed even when the number of persons is fairly large if the opportunities for common experience extend over a sufficiently long period of time. If the time is limited, the number of those who are to develop into a group must be reduced. Clearly, then, if we wish to build real "groups" within larger classes we must see the class as made up of smaller working parties.

As students get accustomed to being in a given class every day, we can observe the sorting and shifting that goes on. A clique may have signed up for the same class in order to be together. A few old pals are cast into the same class by chance. Other students become acquainted with one another after joining the class. Some students never do make friends in one class but belong to a tightly knit group in another. So, in every class, there is a subtle and pervasive network of associations dividing it into informal groups and some isolated individuals.

This is a perfectly natural phenomenon. In the group-living situations you experienced, there were always a number of subgroups. Two or three persons became close confidants, studied together or hiked together, and visited one another's homes. But in the classroom, there is little real group identity to unify the smaller subgroups. For this reason the classroom teacher lacks one of the surest tools for social control; he has minimal group loyalty to which to appeal for support in controlling deviant behavior.

As a result, many teachers, perhaps unconsciously, take refuge

in the process of "Divide and rule." But, as a matter of fact, those leaders who have succeeded best have always followed a quite different precept: Organize and lead. In other words, through recognizing existing associations of people and developing others as they are needed, the leader can guide the total group's efforts more effectively. Learning can occur only *through* and *with* people—a student has to give his *consent* to learning. And when the student is supported by others with whom he already feels at ease, when newly formed groups accept the guidance of someone in a position of leadership, then *consent* to learning is more likely to be given.

Group Work Helps Learning

A number of studies have explored the efficiency of group learning. In one, an attempt was made to see whether individuals or groups were able to solve arithmetical problems more accurately and more efficiently.¹ In this experiment, a number of graduate students in social psychology were first assigned the task of solving some problems individually, then, as members of five groups of four members each, were asked to solve similar problems as a group. The outcomes are interesting: groups seemed assured of a much larger percentage of correct answers than individuals because the group was able to reject incorrect answers and check errors. It was found that other members of the group would tend to detect the incorrect suggestion made by another member. Groups do not err so readily as does the average individual. Furthermore, where there are more heads, there are likely to be more chances for arriving at a good answer. Students thus have a greater opportunity to learn correct, rather than incorrect, methods and solutions.

In a famous study of boys' groups under different types of leadership,² one group of boys was helped to plan and work co-

¹ Marjorie E. Shaw, "A Comparison of Individuals and Small Groups in the Rational Solution of Complex Problems," in *Readings in Social Psychology*, edited by T. M. Newcomb and E. L. Hartley (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1947), pp. 314-315.

² Ronald Lippitt and R. K. White, "An Experimental Study of Leadership and Group Life," in *Readings in Social Psychology*, edited by T. M. Newcomb and E. L. Hartley (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1947), pp. 315-329.

operatively, setting its own goals as a group, choosing from several alternatives the best method to proceed, selecting their own work partners. The quality of the work was superior to that produced in other types of work situations, though the quantity was not so great. Moreover, it was found that in this group atmosphere the boys liked one another better, liked the work they were doing better, and liked the leader better.

Since the most lasting learning is that in which behavior is modified, it is interesting to note that group decisions have a more significant effect upon behavior than other learning situations do.³ A study of food habits during World War II illustrates the point. Housewives were instructed, some through lecture and others through group discussion and decision, regarding the importance of eating some of the less desirable cuts of meat. Housewives who participated in group decisions followed the decisions of the group. Housewives who were given the lecture material were much less likely to do as directed.

Some of the most striking effects of group membership on learning are reported in the literature on group therapy. Alcoholics Anonymous is one familiar example of the principle that group membership can help individuals where isolation and punitive or even medical treatment will not. The same idea is suggested for school practice in the prevention of delinquency. It has been found that the delinquent is often the student who is failing in school. This failure may have its roots in social rather than academic participation. The youth who is outside the group, outside society, tries to hit back. The teacher must assist these "peripheral" adolescents in finding something to which they belong, a place where they are needed and where their contributions are valued and respected.

In adolescence the role of the peer group is of tremendous significance, perhaps more significant than at any other period in life. Utilizing this fact as one of the fundamentals of teaching procedure enables teachers to influence the kind of group life that the adolescent will experience. Instead of bewailing the undesirable activities of gangs, the snobbery and insulation of cliques, the pain of indi-

³ Kurt Lewin, "Studies in Group Decision," in *Group Dynamics, Research, and Theory*, edited by Dorwin Cartwright and Alvin Zander (Evanston, Ill.: Row Peterson Company, 1953), pp. 287-291.

viduals being left out, we can directly influence the patterns of adolescent peer groups.

Perhaps we should look at the role of groups in learning in still another light. Typically, in our modern culture, boy meets girl for serious discussion only under the most exceptional circumstances. The contact is usually restricted to a few undercover words in class, a brief conversation in the hall, or the bantering chitchat at the soda fountain. Instead of criticizing the lack of significant ties binding husband and wife or the readiness with which young people contemplate divorce today, we should perhaps examine our teaching practices to see whether some fault might not lie there. We may have made it very difficult indeed for boys and girls to talk normally together about important things.

We must provide in all our classroom situations more and more opportunities for young people to learn about one another as they try together to understand the problems of modern civilization. Group work can assist adolescents in their solution of important human-relations problems. In pioneer life the sharing by man and wife of the burden of solving important problems contributed to the solidarity of the family. Practice in this skill should be provided by the modern high school.

But what is life like in many classrooms? Each student is a separate island. Little real interchange is permitted, though much goes on that is surreptitious. The students learn together the same material, some lagging far behind, others impatiently surging ahead of the rest. This uniformity of procedure has earned many high schools the condemnation of teaching for mediocrity. Such criticism need no longer be merited. One of the contributions of "group" learning is that it meets the intellectual, social, and emotional needs of the great variety of personalities present in every classroom.

Where Do You Begin?

A teacher who wishes to use small groups in his class gains security if he, himself, has recent experience with group activities. As you read in the succeeding sections of this chapter about the

different kinds of group activities, you and your fellow teachers-to-be might select several and try them out. What worked? What required faster action? Where did you fumble? Was the problem clear? How might group composition have affected the outcome? These and similar questions might be raised as you try the group approach. As a result of this fresh experience, you will know how group work feels to students when you try it in a classroom.

An added reassurance will come from your knowledge of the previous experience of adolescents in group activities. In many elementary classrooms there is frequent committee work of various kinds. Many youngsters have belonged to Boy or Girl Scout or other youth groups. The 4-H Clubs are reaching out to more and more rural young people. In these settings adolescents have acquired many group skills and have learned useful attitudes toward group work. Consequently you should not assume that these adolescents, in junior or senior high school, are incapable of group action. They are quite capable of it! Even those who have had a minimum of exposure to groups—or none at all—can soon learn to work adequately in small groups.

There are two commonly used ways of starting group work in a classroom. *One method* is to develop several small committees to assist in administering the classroom. Such committees, for example, can supervise the supply room for a chemistry class. Committees can regulate the distribution of paper in a typing class. Bulletin board committees can keep current events corners up to date in social studies classes. *A second method* is to start a class with a number of short-term groups, sometimes called “buzz” groups, whose purpose is to canvass opinion or make suggestions for class plans in a minimum of time with a maximum of participation.

Which approach to use depends in large measure on the confidence of the teacher himself. A teacher who has little familiarity with group activity might start with the committee system, since it is most nearly a logical outgrowth of other kinds of club and youth group activities. If a teacher has had some recent experience with group work, the buzz group approach might make a good beginning.

The physical arrangement of some classrooms, and the content

of some subject-matter areas, lend themselves more easily to one type of group activity than to another. But, with experience, most teachers can successfully employ many kinds of groups.

One warning: Beginning teachers sometimes consider asking the students themselves whether they would like to use this way of doing their work. It is certainly part of good student-teacher planning to permit choices among approaches to learning. However, to ask a group of students, "Do you want to try buzz groups now?" when the class has no idea of the nature of a buzz group, is to ask them to render judgment from ignorance.

A better way to begin is to follow the natural sequence of unit development. When the class is at the point where decisions are needed about *what* problems should be studied in the unit, buzz groups can be initiated. Instead of having thirty-three youngsters try to reach agreement, the teacher can say, "We want to get *everyone's* opinion on what problems we ought to cover in this unit. I will put you in small groups of five, for about five minutes. If we all put our heads together, we ought to be able to make better choices." Meeting places in the classroom are then designated. Leaders, for this first time, are appointed. And group work begins.

One final word before proceeding with more specific details about the organization of group work. This approach to learning is not a panacea. It will not solve all the teacher's problems; no one method can do that. The classroom that succeeds best is the classroom in which a variety of approaches to learning is used. Any one method used too frequently dulls the learning edge.

Short-Term Groups

Short-term, or buzz, groups, which are typically used to attack specific jobs, are limited in scope. The tasks can usually be completed in a short period of time—from five to twenty minutes. Good preplanning enhances the probability of success of buzz groups, with all the accompanying bonus of improved morale. A cold, disinterested, even hostile class can often be transformed into a responsive

one as a result of a buzz-group experience that comes at the right time and asks the right questions. What does the preplanning include?

Deciding on the problem for the groups to discuss. The task of the buzz group must be clearly defined both in the mind of the teacher and in that of the groups. Typically, buzz groups are useful for getting a quick reaction to a controversial issue, for planning the next steps in a unit, for assessing the relative importance of proposed topics of study, and for setting up rules or regulations for class activities or materials.

Choosing the strategic moment to initiate the buzz group. A buzz group may serve to organize a discussion and extend the involvement of the class. For example, a group might be engaged in a heated discussion about athletic policies. It would soon be discovered that not everyone could express his opinion. At this time the teacher could set up buzz groups so that all students could speak their minds on the topic. Such a buzz-group session would occur, then, mid-way through a discussion period. Buzz groups may also be used to warm up a class for general discussion. Still others may be used to bring together and organize ideas expressed at the end of a discussion or study period.

Determining how the buzz groups will be chosen. The several ways of choosing buzz groups are important enough to require a separate discussion. For the moment, let us say that the method of choosing will be based on which kind of group composition will "jell" fastest and still suit the purpose. The buzz group will usually number about five persons, though any number from three to six can "buzz" effectively. A group that is too small has too few resources to call upon; a group that is too large presses members into a silent role.

Setting the time limits. Time is the most effective discipline for keeping lively adolescents focused on the problem to be solved. The time allowed should be as short as possible while allowing members to explore the topic. It is always better to allow too little time than too much. If too much time is given, the inventive minds of adolescents can develop all kinds of diversions to fill the unoccupied moments.

It does take experience to determine how long adolescents can

talk about something productively before the discussion degenerates into horseplay. If the teacher underestimates the time, he can of course let students know that, since the task has not yet been accomplished, they can have another three or four minutes to finish. Or, if some groups finish sooner than expected, he can call time on them all. The students will not be watching the clock if the problem is a real one and an absorbing one. Indeed, it is not unknown for a group to be told it had five minutes for discussion and, fifteen minutes later, not believe that the original time limit had been exceeded!

Establishing group organization. Only a chairman and a recorder or reporter are needed for organizing each group. But how will they be chosen? Sometimes the teacher can select them ahead of time on the basis of known qualities of leadership or knowledge of the field. Sometimes the tasks can be used to bring in students who do not usually participate. It is often good policy to use very arbitrary means: "The person whose name is nearest the top of the alphabet will be chairman; the person whose name is nearest the bottom of the alphabet will be recorder." If the group members are strangers to one another, such a procedure means that they have to introduce themselves by name. And it makes retreat from the task difficult.

Giving the group its leadership rather than allowing the group to choose its own is useful particularly if the class is unfamiliar with group work. Later, the roles will be assumed rather naturally. But at the beginning, structuring the group helps get work under way quickly. In long-term groups the selection of leadership is vital; in short-term groups it is less important.

Arranging for group reports. Usually the appointed reporter will tell the rest of the class what was decided in his group. These decisions may be listed on the board; they may be the basis for further discussion by the whole class; or the reporters may be asked to form a group to summarize all the findings. It is ordinarily useful for each group to hear and see its own report presented to the total class. Then a certain pride of ownership encourages the youngsters to want to engage in this kind of activity again. The involvement of each person in "his" group's report is assured as each reporter tells what the group accomplished.

Ways of Choosing Members of Buzz Groups

The method of choosing members for buzz groups must be simple and easily executed. The groups are too temporary to justify elaborate selection procedures. Several illustrations of feasible methods are given below.

Groupings may be based on the established seating pattern. Instead of moving students around, the teacher can designate the five students sitting nearest to one another as constituting a group. However, to avoid confusion, the teacher will want to go around the room, pointing out specifically the groups he wishes to be formed. If the seats are in rows, he may group students by rows, either horizontally across the room or vertically from front to back.

Prearranged groupings may be developed. Any one of these factors can be used to divide the class: (1) An alphabetical listing of the students; (2) a sociometric test (see 568-581); (3) talents, backgrounds, or interests—these may be used to set up homogeneous or heterogeneous groups, (4) articulateness and information—students possessing these may be distributed among the groups in order to give them support and help.

When prearranged groupings are used, duplicated lists, with a copy for each student, facilitate rapid organization. At the time the groups are designated, a number should be given to each for purposes of easy identification. A rough sketch on the chalkboard may be used to show where in the classroom each group will meet. Then it is easy for students to move into their buzz groups without confusion. The lists of group members should not be distributed until the moment arrives for the groups to convene, because the listing provides a very tempting occasion for comment (either aloud or undercover) about who is in what group, and with whom!

Instead of duplicating the list, the teacher may put it on the chalkboard before class and pull a map or chart over it until the list is needed. Reading the list aloud is generally unsatisfactory. Students forget their group assignments; reactions to the names of those grouped together may be loud and prolonged; and, invariably, at least one student just doesn't hear his name.

A counting-off device is sometimes useful. Some classes are seated according to their own wishes. Friends sit near friends. When the

teacher seeks to widen the circles of acquaintance, counting-off effects a thorough reshuffling. And besides, it's fun. Starting in one corner of the room, the first student is number 1, the next is 2, and so on. The final number is determined by the size of the class. If there are thirty-five students, and groups of five are wanted, the numbering continues through to 7 and then starts over again. This gives seven groups of five members each. All the 1's are in the first group; the 2's in the second group, and so on.

Numbered cards can be made ahead of time. These cards contain the buzz-group numbers. If there are to be seven groups of five members each, there will be five cards with the number 1 on them, five with 2, and so on to number 7. These can be shuffled and passed out at random by student monitors. The number received designates the student's buzz group. There is some danger that students will trade cards clandestinely with each other in order to get into a particular group. This may be halted by an admonition from the teacher to keep the card one is given; or the teacher may choose to ignore it if it is not widespread enough to defeat the purpose of the procedure. When the groups have been organized, the numbered cards may be collected and used again another time.

Whatever device is used for setting up buzz groups, the important thing is to do it speedily. As we know from observing adolescents, disorder and disturbance in classrooms occur when there is nothing else to do. Whenever seats are to be moved or rearranged, there is an opportunity for someone to wander off on his private pursuits. Quick and efficient transitions from general discussion into buzz groups lessen the likelihood of disturbance. Of course, if the students are genuinely interested in what the groups are going to do, that motivation alone will get them into their groups quickly.

Ways of Using Buzz Groups

A substitute teacher was faced with a class of seniors who had been studying some of the problems of vocational selection. Although the substitute was entirely new to the class, and the class to him, he felt that anything would be better than the usual teacher-student battle that goes on when a substitute comes in. So he took the class by surprise. He asked them to shift their chairs into groups of five, and to list as a group some of the problems they felt they would face

when they entered the world of work after June. The class took up the discussion with vigor, and, when the time was up, a very provocative list of problems had been put on the board. The class was led into a discussion of "Which problem is most important now?" and then, "Which problems can we do something about ourselves, and which can we get help on from the school?" Next day, when the substitute returned, the class demanded another buzz session.

The buzz-group technique, as we have outlined it, has a host of uses. Early in the term buzz groups may discuss questions they would like to have answered in the course. Sometimes, when students have few questions regarding the course, the teacher may outline the variety of possible topics to be covered. This list should include more topics than can be taught. The problem for the groups then is to select those they would like to study. This device gives the students a chance to think critically about the course work ahead, gives them a feeling of proprietorship in the course work to be covered, and also provides an opportunity for them to meet others in the class early in the semester.⁴

Another use for the short-term group is in working out routine problems or exercises together. For example, students may spend part of a period selecting from a list the sentences they consider most "vivid." Or they may grade the quality of a set of anonymous compositions, a procedure that gives them significant practice in critical judgment. The same sort of group situation is useful for judging various musical compositions, artistic productions, lettering charts, floor plans, breakfast menus, recreation habits, propaganda slogans, and the like. One teacher has allowed students in groups to correct their examinations together. Where morale is high and competition for grades has been de-emphasized, this procedure minimizes the chance and the need to cheat or fabricate. It also provides the students with an opportunity to learn the right answer, not just to find out theirs was wrong.

Short-term group activity may be devoted to the group game. This is particularly useful in those classes where a certain amount of drill is needed. The imaginative teacher can devise simple games (see pages 307 and 315) that small groups can play while the rest of the class is engaged in other activities. Or, the whole class may

⁴ Ralph Van Hoesen, "Pupil-Teacher Planning in the Social Studies and Its Psychological Aspects," *School Review*, 58:29-37, January 1950.

play them together in small groups. This latter method ensures a maximum of practice for all, not merely for the most apt or the most backward. It also makes routine drills somewhat more palatable.

Buzz groups may be used to react to problem situations posed by such devices as the "Focus" pictures on moral dilemmas of youth published by the National Conference of Christians and Jews. A teacher may develop his own set of pictures for such a purpose, or the problem situations may be presented to the groups in written form.

In a graduate class in human relations for classroom teachers, anecdotes were written by various class members about situations of particular concern to them in the human-relations area. The following is an example of the kind of problem that was used for buzz-group consideration:

I was talking with friends the other day about school. One of them had a son in my school. I know the boy, though I had not had him in class. He was an average student as far as I knew.

His mother said to me, "You know, I don't think Johnny is doing too well with Mrs. Jones. I don't know what to do about it. Frankly, I'm afraid to go and ask. She'll probably think I've come to complain. And maybe she will take it out on Johnny. He's doing poorly enough already, so you can see why I'm afraid.

I said, "Are you sure Mrs. Jones would act that way?"

"Well, no," Johnny's mother answered. "I'm not sure at all. But how can I afford to take the chance? Would you if you were I?"

I didn't know how to reply.

Some of the newer films that are designed specifically for discussion purposes (*Right or Wrong*, from Coronet Films, and the "What Do You Think?" series from the Canadian Film Board, for example) furnish an excellent springboard for buzz-group discussion. Since the films are provocative, the interest of adolescents is assured. They want to talk about the problem presented! Let them talk. But instead of restricting discussion to the five or ten who will be determined to express their opinions in the available time, set up buzz groups in which everyone gets a chance to talk. And they will!

One last suggestion: At this stage in your career, it may seem somewhat remote to consider the awesome possibility of being asked to lead a discussion at the PTA or chair a section in a conference of educators. Yet in due time these will be part of your expected

professional duties. Skill in arranging buzz groups and leading the subsequent discussions may prove a valuable asset in preparing for such contingencies.

The Long-Term Group

The buzz group serves the class for temporary and immediate assistance. The long-term group is a more permanent working party, which may retain the same membership for several weeks. The kinds of problems attacked, the methods by which group members are chosen, the organization within the groups, and the outcomes of group effort differ from the short-term group because of this continuing membership.

The problems attacked represent relatively large divisions of the work of the class for the semester or the year. If a group is to serve very long, its efforts must be directed toward important problems. After all, a class continues only for some eighteen weeks or less during a semester. No one can countenance devoting any considerable number of periods to this kind of group work unless the purposes served are significant.

In an English class the central problem might be "Developing a Personal Philosophy," with selections from the literature of various countries being appraised by different groups. "Water and How We Use It" might focus the work of several groups in a general science class. The omnipresent task of "Selecting a Vocation" might be investigated by groups in social studies. "The Uses of Geometry" might combine group work with a community survey.

Obviously, even more than with buzz groups, meticulous pre-planning is crucial. The teacher must *first* think through himself, and *second* guide his class to plan:

Feasible dimensions for the project.

Equitable division of labor.

Accessible resources and materials for study.

Explicit goals of immediate appeal and lasting significance.

Since the problems attacked by long-term groups are of some scope and depth, they have many facets to be investigated. *Long-*

term groups, therefore, can undertake more differentiated and specialized jobs than buzz groups. A business education class, for example, might set up its groups according to the divisions of a large office and work through a problem in office management. Because of the longer time period allowed, work that demands a fair amount of skill and coordinated team effort can be attempted with these groups whereas such projects are not feasible with buzz groups.

At the same time, the work of the group can be better adjusted to the group members. This adjustment may be based on criteria of interest, ability, background, social relationships, or any other important common element or difference among the students. It is worth while to investigate these factors in detail and to weigh the composition of groups with great care when the teacher knows that the grouping will last for some time. Buzz groups do not justify such exacting analysis.

Interest Groups

A world history class was studying Egypt. The students became interested in the kind of schools that children went to in ancient times. They expressed interest in various phases of the problem. The teacher listed on the board some of the things they suggested as material that might be worth bringing to class. These included: what the students wore to school; what subjects they studied; what a typical school looked like; what kinds of children went to school. Some were interested in whether there were special kinds of schools for the kings and the nobility; whether there were separate schools for boys and girls; whether their schools were better or worse than ours today. The students were asked to indicate which topic interested them most. The teacher pointed out that some topics might be illustrated by models or drawings; some might be dramatically portrayed to the class. One or two topics demanded research in the main town library, since they were very obscure.

As he looked over the names of the students who had signed up for the various topics, the teacher could easily see how the natural interests of the students had determined the group they chose. Johnny, who liked to carve wood and was interested in very little else, had chosen to work on what a typical school looked like. Polly, who designed her own dresses, chose the group on clothing worn by the students in those days. Tom, with the high IQ, chose the topic on the subjects studied, which might require work at the main library—where he practically lived anyway. And so on around the class.

Ability Groups

The senior English class was very much concerned about passing the English entrance examinations for the state university. Much emphasis was therefore being placed on gaining competence in grammatical usage, reading comprehension, and facility in composition. The teacher gave the class several achievement tests in English and clearly saw the major weaknesses of each student in these three areas. He suggested to the class that he might arrange groups for them in which they could work together on these weaknesses. This seemed to the class to be a good idea. It was agreed that Tuesday and Thursday would be the days when the "problem" groups, as they were to be called, would meet together. Workbooks and special exercises would be provided by the teacher. The other days of the week would be devoted to regular class instruction in the main skills in the areas being studied.

After this plan had been operating for several weeks, the students suggested a revision. It was clear that some students were very good in one area where others were weak. It was also clear that the teacher could not get around to all the groups each period to work with them on their problems. They asked whether every other time one of the better students might be assigned to the groups as a sort of teacher's aide. This meant that a number of the students did not meet with their own groups, but worked as experts with slower or less adept students. Then the situation would be reversed; a student who was skillful in grammar might be poor in reading or in understanding poetry; he would then be given assistance by another student, who had mastered this art.

As the semester progressed, many shifts in groupings occurred. The teacher kept a record of the problem groups and their membership; he also noted those students who acted as teacher's aides. He found that almost every student had worked on at least one aspect of each skill area, and, in addition, all but five students had been able to develop sufficient proficiency in some special topic to be asked to work with a given group for one or more periods. The students felt that this had been a very interesting experience.

Groups Based on Background

A biology class was studying communicable diseases. A question arose about which parts of town were the most sanitary. The students at this union high school came from over half the county, so the question was broadened to include the whole county. By a show of hands, it was found that most of the students fell into natural groupings according to their home addresses. A map of the school

district was obtained from the principal, and rough districts were drawn. All those living in a given district agreed to explore sanitation conditions in their section. By planning with the students, the teacher was able to set up five groups of four to six members for each section of the map. The groups were then given the remainder of the hour to list the things they thought they should look for. The next day, each group submitted its list. A master list was then compiled. The teacher suggested further reading in the text and some additional references so that the students would know how to recognize danger areas. Thus a group project was launched.

Groups Based on Social Relationships

A second-year Spanish class planned a fiesta for a "Back-to-School Night," on which parents visited various classes. Each student was asked to name three students with whom he would like to work. Miss Esperanza discovered some facts about her class that she had never suspected. Albert was widely chosen, whereas she had believed he had few friends. Deborah was selected by only one girl, and she had been certain that everyone liked her. The only two Spanish-American girls in the class did not indicate each other as preferred workmates. Henry, easily her worst student and certainly the most irritating, was chosen more widely than any other person in the class.

As a result of these discoveries, Miss Esperanza had some doubts about the wisdom of student selection. But she decided to balance the groups to the best of her ability. Some of those who were widely accepted she placed with others rarely chosen. It was Miss Esperanza's first attempt to use this means of forming groups. And she soon found that she had made some mistakes. But within a week, with some judicious shifting, the groups functioned surprisingly well.

These examples of varying bases for grouping can, of course, be duplicated in other fields of learning. Instead of assumed spurious dead-level learning, the teacher takes realistic cognizance of the different potentialities among the students.

Advance scheduling of the work of long-term groups is mandatory if a secure sense of progress is to be maintained. Each group should know where it is to be each day (classroom, library, etc.), what it is to be doing (discussing, researching, etc.), which materials and supplies are required (periodicals, pamphlets, etc.), when tasks are to be completed (day, week, etc.), who has the several responsibilities (typing, illustrating, etc.). It is usually good strategy to place on a bulletin board a summary of the essential elements of scheduling.

Almost all students need their time sense sharpened. Before they know it, deadlines are upon them. Group morale deteriorates and the project collapses. A few minutes spent regularly in review of group progress, with specific discussion of what remains to be done, prevents these catastrophes.

The roles of group members tend to become more sharply defined during these periodic appraisals. The leader chosen initially may be replaced. This will be true whether he is teacher-designated or group-chosen. Sometimes teachers do appoint leaders for the first project a class undertakes. And teachers make mistakes. But so do students. The most intellectually able sometimes is not accepted by fellow group members. On the other hand, the most popular may allow the group's work to become confused. In any case, it is wise to insist from the beginning that leadership be rotated.

The teacher will want to help the groups realize that different members may make good leaders for different kinds of work. Some are good preplanners and assigners of responsibility. Others are good expeditors as the work moves along. Still others are fine compilers of final reports and summarizers of group opinion.

Criteria for good leadership and good group membership should be developed in these discussions. Not only are these appreciations vital to living in a democratic society, but they will facilitate the work of the group here and now. Young people should learn to value the quiet, conscientious worker as well as the cheerful organizer.

Sometimes it is feasible to run brief leadership clinics to show group leaders just what responsibilities their job entails. Problems encountered by the different groups can be discussed, and next steps proposed by the several leaders. Warm support from the teacher is, of course, indispensable during such sessions.

Evaluating Group Outcomes

The effectiveness of the group as a group, then, is at least as important as the products of its efforts. The group should become conscious of what helps it to operate well and what obstructs its functioning. This means a good hard look at both individual members and the group as a whole.

It will require some practice before students can look at themselves with any degree of objectivity. Discussion has to be focused on *what* was done to help or hinder, rather than on *who* did it. The list of do's and don'ts will grow gradually. One class developed this list:

HELPS

Willing to work.
 Willing to try something new.
 Cheerful and helpful.
 Has a sense of humor.
 Suggests another way when people disagree.
 Wants to do things well.
 Gets things done on time.

HINDERS

Ducks responsibility.
 Wants to play it safe.
 Cross and selfish.
 Always expecting the worst.
 Insists on having his own way.
 Likes to find the easy way out.
 Has a fine stock of excuses.

Each class should develop its own list. Some classes have found it worth while to make posters generously decorated with caricatures of the various group roles. With a little help, the groups themselves can use these guides to recognize group members' strengths and weaknesses.

Groups have personalities. Some days the whole group is good-natured and optimistic. Other times glum countenances decorate every chair. Expecting these peaks and depressions will help the group live through them. So the wise teacher sketches the case history of a typical group before the project starts.

It is quite normal, for example, for some groups to have a negative attitude toward their work at the beginning. This derives, in part, from the slowness with which any group effort gets under way, and, in part, it results from the native disposition of some students to distrust any departure from standard procedure. Usually, as the group gathers momentum, spirits rise. Members see something concrete accomplished—one report done; materials sent for and received; a well-received progress report to the class. Near the end of the project, morale may weaken again.

Evaluation Forms

Concrete guides to appraisal aid groups in sustaining their effort. Several are described as illustrations of the types each class will wish to devise for itself.

MEETING EVALUATION FORMS

At the end of a period, when the groups have been meeting for some time, the teacher may use a very simple form in order to get a quick check on group members' satisfaction with their meeting:

How Good Was Our Meeting?

Name _____ (or group no. or group topic) _____

1. Check the line below at the point which best indicates your feeling about your group meeting:

Very Good Good All Right Not Very Good No Good

2. What was the best thing about the meeting?
3. What was the main weakness of the meeting?
4. Comments and suggestions:

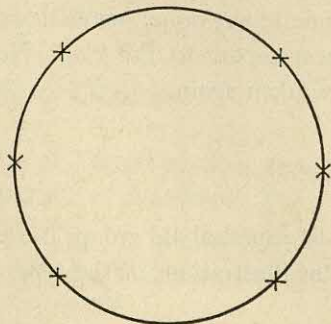
These forms may have to be anonymous, with only the group number or the project title used, in order to protect individual respondents. After the teacher has studied them, it may be useful to give the reports to each group to review. In addition, a summary of the reactions of all members of the group may be reported to the individual groups or to the whole class in order to increase group morale.

GROUP PARTICIPATION RECORDS

These records of group participation may be filled in either by the teacher as he observes the groups or by a member of the group with that special assignment. An example of a form that may be used is given below. This will help the teacher as well as the group see to what extent certain individuals are doing either too much or too little in the group's life. Various kinds of observational forms may be devised by the class itself for special purposes.

GROUP-PARTICIPATION FORM

Leader



The names of group members are written around the circle. Whenever a person makes a contribution, his name is checked. The group-participation pattern may be recorded in any one of three different ways:

 *Quantity participation record:* A tally mark is recorded after each person's name every time he makes a contribution. This gives a sum of contributions.

 *Quality participation record:* As each person makes his contribution, an evaluative mark is put after his name. These marks are:

plus = a contribution that aids group thinking.

minus = a contribution that delays or interferes with group progress in thinking.

zero = a remark that neither aids nor hinders—a “blah” remark.

? = individual asks a question.

In using this scoring method, it is often difficult for observers to put down many minus marks, since it is likely to hurt the feelings of those evaluated. However, if the discussion about the scoring is objective, and everyone sees that a minus score may mean simply lack of skill in group participation, then the negative factors may be recorded without damage to morale.

 *Group interaction record:* An arrow is used to join the names of individuals whenever they talk to one another. When an individual addresses a remark to the group as a whole, the arrow should point out toward the edge of the paper. The pattern recorded here is one of the most interesting, since it is possible to note whether the leader or chairman is dominating the discussion, or whether two people are carrying on a personal argument to the exclusion of everyone else. (See the section on discussion (pages 230–252) for more on this aspect of discussion patterning.)

Use of Group Observers

It may be helpful to use group observers in evaluation, assigning one student to each group. These observers can then report to the whole class on how well the group was able to work together. The role of the observer provides excellent training. As soon as an individual is outside the group, watching only for group interaction and

evidences of progress toward the goal, he learns a great deal about how to be a good group member. The task of observing often helps students who have particular difficulty in working with a group.

Use of Group Recorders

The function of the group recorder may be to report the group's progress both to the group and to the teacher or class. The recorder is more than a secretary, and should be an assignment for boys as well as girls. The recorder helps the group to think toward its goal. The leader of the group can help balance the discussion and include those who are least verbal. But besides the leader, one other person is often needed to help keep group thinking focused on the problem at hand. The recorder asks such questions as, "Now what is the issue we are discussing? . . . Is this an accurate statement of what we decided to do? . . . I am not sure that we covered the point raised by John a while back regarding. . . ." Thus, he helps keep the group moving forward. From the record made in this fashion, the teacher as well as the group has a sense of where it is going, and how.

Methods of Appraising Individual Participation

Often the class as well as the teacher may be dissatisfied with giving a whole group the same grade for the group report or group product, whatever that may be. It is obvious that some students will do better work and more work than others. As a method of helping to assess the individual efforts, the teacher may ask the members of the group to evaluate one another. Each may also evaluate his own progress. A form similar to that given here may be used.

Members of the Group	Effort	Leadership	Quality of Work	Cooperation
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

DIRECTIONS: In the spaces after each name, put a letter grade to indicate how well, in your opinion, each member of your group demonstrated the particular item listed. Include a grade for yourself in each category.

Invitations to self-evaluation help some students to face up to their responsibilities. They can be phrased quite directly:

I do my part of the group's work.

I get my work done on time.

I accept leadership seriously.

I offer any ideas I have.

I assist others.

Etc.

The teacher will find it very useful to develop such a rating form with the assistance of the entire class. When the students aid in building such evaluative tools, they are learning some very important social skills. In addition, they are learning to discriminate among ideas to establish sound values, and to view behavior—their own and that of others—objectively. It is easier for students in the class to fill in such a rating form intelligently if the items and the form itself have been phrased and designed by them. The words are their words. The ideas are phrased in terms understandable to the class members, and it is clear to them just what it is they will do with the rating form. Students often fail in following directions, filling in workbooks, completing exercises, because they have no sense of responsibility for the materials. Opportunities such as those provided in building evaluative scales help to develop this important feeling of responsibility for learning.

Reporting on the Group Project

While some long-term groups will not have anything to report to the rest of the class, others need to share with their classmates the results of their research. Experience with group reports has been gratifying wherever the groups have been encouraged to try new ways of educating their classmates. The following steps should be taken with the class prior to group reporting:

Set a deadline for groups to report. Some groups may report earlier than others, or all groups may be asked to be ready for reporting by a certain date. This date may be shifted forward or back depending on the progress of the groups in obtaining the needed information or performing the assigned tasks.

Agree on the function of the group report. If the report is to inform, then the group must emphasize facts; must seek ways of discriminating between important and unimportant facts; must find media for presenting factual material so that all can see it at once, such as graphs, charts, slides. If the report is to stimulate discussion, then a panel, a debate, a dramatic introduction of some sort is called for.

Discuss what it means to educate others. The class will need very often to analyze the difference between that which is educational and that which is merely novel, entertaining, or startling. Turn the thinking of the class upon what their classmates *need* and *want* to know.

Encourage originality. Point out the poor effects of a dull, boring, and confused presentation. Suggest some things that groups can do to enliven their report and attract the interest of the class.

Some tenth-grade students who were reporting on their vocational choice, elementary school teaching, recognized that they were shy and fearful about facing their classmates. They therefore borrowed the school tape recorder, and, in the privacy of a quiet room, merely conversed about their findings. The next day in class the recorded report had a freshness and vitality that pleased everyone.

Review the material on good oral reporting. Since the success of many group reports will depend on the skill of the members in oral presentation, some class discussion of oral report forms is very useful.

Arrange for responsibility for evaluation of information contained in the report. It should be clear just what the class audience will be asked to recall as a result of the presentation. The teacher may announce that the group will make up exam questions on the basis of its reports, that he will himself take this responsibility, or that designated members of the class will be asked to make up questions for a later quiz. Or, the class may be directed to take notes on the presentation, or to summarize the main points presented by the group. This is a vital aspect of assuring class attention to the

report, but the teacher will want to be careful not to make the audience so anxious about every minor fact as to blur the major points the group is seeking to communicate.

Designate clearly the teacher's role during the group report. Sometimes the teacher may request a few moments at the end of the report to add or summarize or emphasize some point the group may have overlooked. Or, he may want to give a brief evaluation of the report. Once in a while a discussion is so lively or a report is so amusing that the class gets somewhat out of hand; then the teacher should step in. If a group member freezes completely with stage fright, the teacher may want to come to his rescue rather than leaving it up to a chairman.

Remember that it is not always necessary for a group to report directly to the class. Sometimes too much time is taken in listening to other students report. The group report should be a significant activity, and each report must be carefully worked out. Sometimes using bulletin board displays or circulating a written report is a satisfactory substitute for the oral report. Too frequent group reports can become monotonous and may be as inefficient as too few.

The Hazards of Group Work

As all teachers know, the best-made plans for a delightful instructional period can evaporate like so much fog in a hot sun. A fine plan may not work because the students just cannot be stimulated to effort by anything short of physical assault. And that would gain nobody anything. At other times, students wade into a project with the best will in the world but soon flounder and bog down.

Group work, with its considerable stress on initiative and independence, enjoys its share of success and failure. Some of the mistakes that make failure more likely are listed below.

Starting a group or committee project without preparation of the class by the teacher. What is the group to do? Who is to do it? How are leaders to be chosen? What is the responsibility of group members? These and similar questions should be explored early and fully.

Setting up a research job but failing to provide materials for

the groups. Or providing too few materials so that many are idle while a few do the work.

Confusing individual goals with group goals. Because students are so used to individual grades and individual work situations, it is often difficult for them to learn how to be responsible and co-operating group members. The teacher must assess the level of group skills of the entire class as well as of individual students in order to provide needed guidance along the way. The problem chosen for group work should be one that requires or rewards *group* effort, not one that could more easily be done alone.

Making projects either too complicated or too simple for the time available. If the project cannot be accomplished, a group will soon give up the task. If the problem is so easy that it can be solved in far less time than provided, then members are going to find something else to occupy their time.

Putting the wrong people together. Sometimes certain combinations of students are explosive. The teacher should always announce to the class, particularly when setting up long-term groups, that, if necessary, members may be shifted around. With experience, a teacher learns which ways of grouping a particular class result in most progress toward learning and toward individual growth.⁵

The Teacher Learns, Too

It is a truism of education that the closer a teacher can get to knowing each student as a person, the better he will be able to provide an education for that student. One of the special dividends of group work is the large fund of observations about learning needs and potentials that the teacher accumulates. Susie surprises you by coming up with good compromises. Loudmouthed Jack injects a needed bit of humor when discussion verges on argument. Joe is particularly sensitive to those who have not yet had a chance to say anything. Nancy is so intent on work that she drives the other members of the group too hard.

When groups are effectively at work, the teacher does not settle

⁵ R. Murray Thomas, "Chaos in the Sixth Grade," *Understanding the Child*, 21:113-115, October 1952.

back at his desk with a sigh of relief for a needed rest. Rather, this is a rare opportunity to see his students whole. Many teachers have come to a new appreciation of some students by observing the adequacy with which they can operate with their peers. These may be the same students who try and often succeed in making life miserable for teachers. The role of the teacher is to provide support, to give a word of advice where needed, to assist when a real impasse is reached, but, even more, to observe and become acquainted with the students.

SUMMARY

Learning with others is an important pathway to better understanding of how to live with others. In group efforts, adolescents may learn not only the subject matter of the curriculum but the skills of working in a social group.

Although the significance of individual achievement in learning must never be forgotten, our high schools have for too long promoted this learning in isolation from fellow learners. The very fact that young people so successfully evade our dicta, "Do your homework by yourself"; "Do not help your neighbor on his experiment"; and so forth, demonstrates that in some ways they are wiser than we in recognizing the benefits of mutual help and discussion. But using group techniques in a classroom requires more than merely setting up committees; it involves deliberate manipulation of social relations to improve both individual learning and group achievement. Careful planning by the teacher with the class and with each small group is necessary for successful utilization of the principles of group dynamics.

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Toward More Permanent Learning

MERE SURVIVAL in this complex world of ours requires having ready for use a vast number of attitudes, concepts, and skills. One of the basic functions of the secondary school is to develop much of this needed facility in young people. Only half the job is accomplished, however, if learning is forgotten soon after it is presented. How can we ensure greater retention? This recurrent question pursues every teacher. In this chapter the problems of helping students retain what they learn through various drill, study, and review procedures will be discussed, and some useful games for drill purposes described.

Distinguishing between Drill and Review

Review and drill are supplementary concepts. *Review* may be defined as *reconsideration of learning* to deepen understanding of

relationships. The separate elements of these relationships may require drill. *Drill* provides *intensive repetition of elements* to ensure swift, accurate response. Drill is intended to establish associations that are available without a "thinking-through" to derive them each time the associations are needed. Thus, we need to know arithmetical combinations without each time reasoning out the answer. Obviously, not everything we study is a fit subject for drill. But once drill is proved to be appropriate, the learning established is retained best when it becomes part of a larger pattern of understanding. This larger pattern is furnished by review.

Perhaps this differentiation seems purely academic. It is not. Many long hours are still wasted in high school classrooms drilling on materials that are never needed as automatic responses. And still more hours are spent unprofitably on materials that really do need drill but the drill does not take place in a setting that gives it meaning for the student.

An example may help to make concrete the difference between review and drill. It is necessary to drill some words in spelling. But these ought to be the words needed by the student to express himself in writing. He does not need drill on words he never uses in his writing. Even those words on which drill seems justified will only be retained correctly if they are re-used in further writing. This writing is the best kind of spelling review.

It is clear, then, that students need both drill and review. For each there are distinctive procedures. These procedures have been generalized in the following discussion so as to be applicable in most high school classrooms.

Suggestions for Using Drill

One repeated criticism of today's high schools alleges that drill has been outlawed. Hence, so the argument runs, learning is not as solid as it used to be: spelling is poorer; arithmetic is weaker; handwriting is less legible. The evidence about achievement does not bear out the critics. But there is a grain of truth in the accusation about drill. No responsible educator has advocated abandoning drill.

Yet some teachers act as though an irrefutable authority had issued this dictum.

Actually, drill in its proper place is as strongly recommended as it ever was. The "proper place," however, is better defined than it used to be. It is now recognized that drill must be restricted to skill learnings: motor skills, such as using tools and machines; mental skills, such as using an index or developing correct pronunciation in a foreign language. Drill is wasted on principles, such as Gresham's law; attitudes, such as a feeling of responsibility toward a community; appreciations, such as responsiveness to music. This is the principal general restriction on drill, but there are three other more specific limitations:

All students may not need repetition of the same material. Only rarely should the whole class be engaged in identical drill.

Unless great care is exercised, repetition quickly becomes monotonous and breeds misbehavior.

Only a few skills can be drilled at a time; otherwise, retention is poor.

If these limitations are respected, drill has an important place in learning.

In addition, a number of suggestions to guide the use of drill can be listed. Each teacher will see that some of these principles are more persuasive in one field of learning than in another and will make his own adaptations.

Make certain that the student realizes why he needs the skill to be drilled. No one gains much from repeating something unless he can see a need for it.

Take time to see that the student understands how to do it. It is quite possible to "groove in" an erroneous, awkward, or confused procedure.

Supervise initial practice closely. There are so many variations in the way learning proceeds that diagnosis and adaptation of practice soon becomes important. The student must capitalize on his strengths and consciously avoid his weaknesses. The emphasis in diagnosis should, of course, be on the positive.

Introduce variety to retain good morale. A later section of this chapter suggests games as one means of minimizing monotony.

Keep adjusting both the amount and the kind of practice to

the individual student. Spelling bees are good examples of drills that give most practice to those who need it least and stress oral repetition when written would be more appropriate.

Use shorter periods and space them over some time. Long drill periods tend to suffer from students' "going through the motions." Effective drill requires continuing effort to improve.

Offer regular opportunities to apply what has been learned. This provides reassurance that the labor of drill is worth it.

Resist the temptation to keep adding items for drill. Unfortunately, so many practice exercises are available that it is all too easy to use one more to "keep them busy."

Provide a number of ways to get help. Since good drill is individualized, assistance must be, too. The teacher will get around as fast and as often as he can. But aid can also be furnished by other students. Sometimes, teams of two students can be "coach and pupil," aiding each other and reversing roles at regular intervals. Self-checking exercises also give responsible students a chance to develop their own insights.

Devise graphic ways of recording progress. Individual charts, score cards, and rating sheets make improvement concrete and apparent. They show the student where he started and how far he has climbed. They become a silent challenge to push a little higher. No teacher wants the reputation of being just a "drill master." But this understandable desire need not keep drill completely out of his classroom. Adolescents accept the necessity, indeed the advisability, of drill in acquiring skill in a sport. They should be guided to see drill as equally useful for developing classroom learning skills.

Review Procedures

Review furnishes the over-all structure for retaining learning. Both the learning of skills developed through drill and the learning of concepts, attitudes, and appreciations are joined in a framework of concrete relationships. The culmination of a unit in science, for example, might well demonstrate some skills with laboratory equip-

ment and materials as well as some ideas, feelings, and sensitivities about the need to conserve natural resources. When the student sees how all these learnings belong together, he has an organizing structure that helps him hang on to what he has studied.

How can teachers regularly provide good opportunities for review? Obviously, the culmination of a unit is not enough. Some part of each day's work should be planned as review. No student should begin or leave a class with the loose ends of learning dangling. He needs a chance every day to tie things together.

Review may begin the work of the day. This opportunity is particularly valuable for those who learn more slowly, precisely because they do not "tie things together" well. Review may encompass a brief statement by a student, or several students, to all or part of the class about: (1) the material covered yesterday, or (2) today's assignment, or (3) the plans made for today's work. Teachers need to remember that since yesterday's class, each student has been taught in four or five other classes. The work of each class is usually unrelated to that of the others. If the student has the work of any special class clearly in mind, it is that of the class he just left, and *not*, in all likelihood, the class he now enters.

Some fields of instruction probably do provide a more immediate sense of organization than others. Mathematics, for example, is often taught so that each day's work progresses rather inevitably from that of the previous day. In social studies and English classes, on the other hand, the sequence may depend on long-range understandings, with some elements playing a part one day but not necessarily again for some time. For example, in American history, understanding of World War I contributes in some measure to understanding the 1920's, but may soon drop out of consideration as other aspects are viewed. As the study of World War II is approached, the earlier study of World War I may be pertinent again.

Review may also end the work of the day. The few minutes before the bell rings are not the time to introduce material. The students are much too aware that the end is near. It is wiser to do work clearly labeled "The End for Today." This strengthens the student's sense of having accomplished something. The review may center in such queries as these:

How would you summarize what we did today?

How does this relate to what we have been studying?

What next steps do you see?

The review at the end of the unit is, of course, a larger undertaking. Perhaps most difficult of all in this kind of review is the task of involving all students in the re-viewing and re-consideration. So often those already well versed in the subject take most of the opportunities to review, while those who need the reconsideration most sit passively on the side lines.

Probably the least effective review procedure is the recitation, the teacher-student response situation or the oral quiz. In such a situation only the one student being quizzed by the teacher is actively involved; the others are nervously wondering what question will hit them!

How can review procedures be improved? For one thing, it helps to develop with the class a guide for review. The major divisions of study can be established through general class discussion and small-group work:

What were the major things we learned in this unit? Students should be encouraged to try to add *personal touches* as they look back on their work. Standardized summaries should be avoided. A student's own chart, his own card file, his own generalizations couched in his own language, his own collection of examples and reports, serve him better than any "prepared mix."

How did we arrive at these learnings? A renewed sense of the sequence of development lends clarity to the review: first we did this, and that led to something else, which developed into some further study. It may help to think again of the specific activities: the survey, the role-playing, the group work. How did they contribute? Or it may be useful to recall some materials: a motion picture, a tape recording, a series of pamphlets. With what learnings were they associated? Sometimes it is even worthwhile to repeat an activity (such as an especially enjoyed role-playing experience), or to use a material again (perhaps an unusually helpful motion picture).

Where can we apply what we have learned? Students should know the uses of knowledge and skills in a world where they will

very soon face adult responsibilities. Where can they use the results of their study of "Families and Friends" in literature, of "Weather" in science, of "Percentage and Interest" in mathematics, of "How We Pay for Government" in social studies? Specific areas of application should be discussed: personal behavior, reading the newspaper, watching television, discussion in the family.

How does this unit relate to what we have learned previously—this semester, last year, in elementary school? Articulation of learning both within the high school and with the elementary school still is tenuous at best. It can be improved only when each high school teacher learns himself what his students have been taught before, uses this knowledge in the planning of new units, reinforces and reconsiders the old learning with the new. The lack of information about what has been taught in the elementary school continues to be an even more serious weakness than the uneven coordination at the high school level.

Review procedures should, of course, be related to evaluation procedures. In part, evaluation will include paper-and-pencil examinations. If the examination is to appraise broad concepts, then the review should be of the same quality. It is frustrating to students to have a review on this high plane when they know very well that they will be quizzed on specific details. One way to ensure a common understanding about emphasis is to ask students themselves to prepare examination questions. Discussion can then clarify which are regarded as desirable kinds of inquiry. And some of the acceptable contributions may be included in the examination.

Games in the Classroom

Mr. Anderson's class in biology had just finished its first experience with a microscope. It was time to see what the class had learned. Mr. Anderson placed in front of the room a box labeled "Quiz Questions." He explained that the questions should ask a student to show that he knows how the microscope works either by describing the procedure or by demonstrating it. The best questions, as judged by a student evaluation committee, would be used in the class test. The box filled quickly. When the day of the test came,

each student joined a team. The team members drew questions from those selected by the committee, and a score was kept by the evaluation committee. The desire to do well by one's team was intense. Mr. Anderson had rarely seen his class try so hard.

From this description, it is easy to see why games may be useful in assisting learning. We can list some of the reasons:

Games break classroom routines in a pleasant way.

They provide an opportunity to see familiar material in a new relationship.

They are excellent motivation for the kind of learning that requires drill.

They help the uninterested to become part of the class in learning.

They are useful for fixing details in the students' minds: they contribute to more permanent learning.

They are fun.

In all classes, there is a certain amount of material that is, in itself, not very interesting—connecting a name with a date or an incident in history; spelling new words or names of objects; remembering sequences of events or processes; learning terminology. These and similar kinds of material are easily adapted to game situations. The students learn the material more readily, since the atmosphere of the classroom is encouraging rather than discouraging.

Teachers in the elementary grades have found games to be essential not only to learning skills, but also to help children work together as part of a group. In the high school, the technique is not used as much. There is an unfortunate impression that using games is "kid stuff" or "sugar-coating." The attitude that learning, to be genuine, must have more unpleasant than pleasant aspects is all too prevalent in our culture. Yet, such an attitude is a denial of what we know about how people learn; namely, that they learn when they wish to learn; that more is learned from success than from failure; that more is learned from pleasant than from unpleasant experiences. It must also be remembered that high school students are not very far removed from childhood. They enjoy many activities common to both stages of development.

Most high school teachers who have used games in their classes

have had good student response. In one remedial English class, where students with repeated histories of failure in reading, writing, and spelling had been segregated, the youngsters begged the teacher to let them "fish." And what was this exciting game? A stack of cards with words written on them was placed face down on a desk. One student was the "game warden." The others, usually five or six in number, sat around the table and each drew a card in turn. The student who drew had to make up a complete sentence, and a correct one, using that word. The "warden" judged the sentences. And these sixteen- and seventeen-year-old boys played the game together very intently, learning a great deal about meaning in context and good usage. How much more pleasant this simple device made the exercise! Students who had balked at writing or reciting orally, who refused to do their homework in English, were very happy to "learn" their English skills through a simple little game.

The imaginative teacher can make up his own games, but here are some examples that can be adapted to many classes:

Who Am I?

A world history class, after a study of Greek and Roman history, was divided into two teams, one taking Greek historical figures and the other Roman. Each team decided on the figures to present, one for each student. The student then gave to the other team one or two clues about his identity; the other team was allowed a certain number of questions to help them guess. If they failed to guess in the stated time after using up all their questions, they did not make a point. The teams alternated in asking each other to guess the identity of a character.

ADAPTATIONS

Science—to identify different chemicals; insects; diseases; germs; plants.

English—to identify characters in a book; parts of speech; authors; books or poems.

Music—to identify musicians; instruments; selections from recordings.

Art—to identify artists; paintings.

Twenty Questions is a variation of the Who Am I? type of game. One teacher has used this method successfully: A master of ceremonies and four "experts" seat themselves at the front of the room. The M.C. starts the game by announcing the subject he has chosen for himself—animal, vegetable, or mineral, person, place, or idea, according to the particular class and subject. On the board, hidden from the experts, the exact item is written. The object of the game is to see whether the experts can guess the identity of the M.C., using only twenty questions among the four and framing questions that can be answered directly by yes or no. The class is in on the secret, since they can see what the M.C. has taken to represent. Using only four students as the questioners and a different M.C. each time lessens the possibility of confusion in the class. Few students are actually participating; the rest make up the audience. By having the M.C. and the experts represent two different teams previously set up in the class, the level of audience interest is raised. Score can be kept on how often each group of four is able to guess correctly within the specified number of questions. The number of questions, of course, may be reduced or increased according to the ability and knowledge of the class.

Football and Baseball

These games are very similar, and may be alternated according to the sport in season. Basketball and track rules may also be used.

The class is divided into two teams, and a captain is chosen either by the team or by the teacher. The teacher or the students or both have previously composed a series of questions on the material the class has studied. The questions are sorted into three groups by the teacher or by a committee of students: easy, hard, very hard. In baseball, a correct answer to an easy question gives the team a one-base hit; a hard question, two bases; very hard, three bases; and some especially difficult questions can be added for home runs. Each side gets its innings; three wrong answers are equal to three outs. Then the other side is "at bat." The role of the captain is to decide the "batting order" and what kind of a hit the student is going to try for—a one-base hit (easy question), two-base, or home run,

as the case may be. The members of the team may of course want to consult with the captain about each person's chance of being successful at the level of question he is to ask for. A diamond placed on the board and a scorekeeper will assist in keeping track of the game. The teacher should be the umpire; otherwise, student squabbling over a right or wrong answer can spoil the game. It is important to establish the rules clearly before the game starts. Since the students invariably know the rules of these games very well, it is not difficult to clear up the possible points of controversy. In baseball, it is important to decide whether, if a man is on first base and the next student answers a two-base question, that puts the first man on third base or gets him home for a run for his team. The class can decide this issue quickly before the game starts.

In football the questions are ranked by number of yards according to how hard the question is. Each team gets four questions (four "downs") to make the necessary ten yards; or the ball is handed over to the other team. The farther down the field one team gets toward the goal line, of course, the farther the other team has to carry the ball back down the field in the opposite direction.

ADAPTATIONS

The two teams may previously have had a chance to prepare the questions to be asked; thus, the drill is made doubly effective, since the students must know the material in order to ask the questions to begin with, then must know it in order to answer. The teacher or the students may decide the degree of difficulty of the questions; the teams may get only the questions asked by the other team, or the questions may be mixed, giving each team a fifty-fifty chance of getting its own questions.

Evaluation may be carried on by the teams or by selected members if the questions are submitted prior to playing the game and are reviewed for pertinence, clarity, and significance. The teacher may choose to review the questions and give added points to the team that submitted the better questions.

Answers to the questions may also be provided by each team, before the game is played, for the teacher to check; this provides even more opportunity for review.

Instead of having the teacher give the questions, each team may do so; one person being pitcher and tossing the ball (question) to the batter on the other team; then the next person in line takes the floor as pitcher, next batter; and so on.

Penalties: Each team may be penalized for infractions of the rules, such as getting too noisy, illegal coaching, asking questions that had previously been ruled out, and similar faults. The teacher may also choose to penalize a team for poorly thought-out questions, superficial questions, and so forth. These penalties should usually not be invoked until the class has become used to playing the game.

Two eleventh-grade United States history classes, one slow and one average in ability, played the baseball game as part of review before a quiz. Both classes enjoyed the game very much; the slower class was easier to control and did not get so excited or full of "team spirit" as the other class. When the game was halted for another activity (hearing a recording), the two classes were reluctant to stop, even though the material had been relatively uninteresting and remote in time. The students paid close attention to both the questions and the answers in order to be sure that their team was getting the plays called right.

Quiz Kids

A quiz master introduces the "Quiz Kids." These students may be representatives of teams or groups in the class, may volunteer for the game, or may be chosen by lot by the teacher so that anyone and everyone has a chance and an obligation to participate. The Quiz Kids are replaced at regular intervals during the game. They are seated at the front of the room. From a box, the quiz master draws a question that has been prepared previously by a committee or by the class groups or teams. Any one of the Kids may answer the question, the one raising his hand first usually being chosen to do so. If a student once raises his hand, he cannot withdraw it. For each correct answer, the Quiz Kids gets a tally, which may be his personal score or part of his team score. If none of the Quiz Kids can answer, audience volunteers may try, thus getting a chance to add

to their team score. However, if the questions have been prepared by the teams, they should be so marked that a team member does not try to answer a question he has himself prepared.

Card Games

We are all familiar with the game of Authors. In this game, a set of cards is made up with the names of famous books and plays and their authors. The cards are shuffled and passed out to the players (four to six) so that all have the same number of cards (six or eight). The rest of the cards are put face down on the table. Each person tries to match author and book. Each such pair is placed in front of the player and gives him one score point. Each person must draw one card and discard one card. He has an option of drawing from the discard pile (those left face up) or from the pile that is face down. However, if he draws from the discard pile, he must take either the top card, or, if he wants one of the other cards, all those preceding it. The student who correctly matches all the cards in his hand first, wins.

Variations of this game applicable to other fields are obvious. Names, dates, events can be matched in history and social studies classes. In science, matching names and properties of materials can be arranged. In English and foreign-language classes, such a game can assist in vocabulary drill, in learning the parts of speech, and in practicing good usage.

The teacher probably should prepare the first few cards, but the rest would be a worth-while student project. Thus both the students who make and those who use the cards are gaining practice in review, with a special kind of recognition for talent in making neat cards for the game. In fact, some students may select the items for the test; others may check the items for accuracy, relevance, and coverage; and, finally, a group may elect to cut and letter the cards. In this way, many talents are used at many levels of intellectual competence and cooperative effort.

Card games may also be used to learn sequences or chronology. Thus, some of the cards may be a number series and the others a set of historical events; the object of the student then is to put the

cards in the right sequential order. This variation might best be played by one student alone, then checked by another for accuracy as a quick method of individual practice and review.

Limitations of Classroom Games

In team games, choosing sides presents problems unless the teacher makes the selection on some basis which protects the feelings of students. If a student chooses his team, some mental hazards are almost unavoidable. Those who are chosen last go through moments of anguish; they are left seated while one by one their companions are asked for. Conspicuous to themselves and to everyone else is the fact that they are "not wanted." Certain students may almost always be chosen last. Obviously, this increases the individual student's feeling of being rejected, left out, or actively disliked.

At least one aspect of some games does not make for very efficient learning. Those who are least successful, those who are least adept at the type of problem presented, are those who go down first. Those who know the most get all the practice! Those who are dull or slow or poor in the subject are quickly singled out *through failure*. Such youngsters are those who have already known failure most often. Those who have succeeded continue to succeed; they continue to get the practice of answering correctly and obtain the rewards of recognition and approval from both the teacher and the team.

One other limitation of games is apparent. The games described all assume that the skills for drill are carefully chosen. Although it is important to provide students with the tools of the various subjects, persistent overemphasis on skills will interfere with broader kinds of learning—development of attitudes, general understandings, logical thinking, critical and discriminating tastes, sound value judgments. The teacher should carefully examine the content of such games as are used and constantly ask himself, Is this skill really worth learning? And, Am I really confident that, if the students learn this material, they will be more competent adults? And, Could the time being spent in learning this material be better spent in

considering some broad problems related to the student's life here and now? Games are a very effective method of making drill interesting and enjoyable, but it is still important to know that the drill is directed toward genuine learning.

Supervising and Guiding Classroom Study

Teachers can develop interesting and significant classroom work and provide well-planned assignments to meet many different individual needs, but if students do not know some of the basic methods of study, such planning is to no avail. In preparation for both drill or review periods, students need to know how to use study time.

In most classrooms, the materials to be studied are reading materials. Thus an understanding of reading problems precedes any consideration of developing study skills. (See Chapter 14). A student who cannot read obviously cannot study assigned chapters. Once a minimum of reading ability has been demonstrated, and the teacher has considered the specific reading problems of the assigned material, he can proceed to consider with students how to study and to learn most efficiently.

Many high school teachers in the academic subject fields today plan each period to allow time for in-class study. The out-of-school competition for the student's time means that often home study is either not accomplished at all, or is done rapidly and carelessly. In addition, if students do not know how to study, the teacher can provide the needed guidance only if he is able to observe their study habits.

Whether study is to be in or out of class, the importance of teacher supervision must be emphasized. Supervision begins with preparing the students to use study time in class to advantage. Such preparation includes:

Agreeing with the class on the purposes of the study period. Often motivation for use of study time is on the rather low level of "If you don't do this in class, you will just have to do it at home."

This implies that learning is a distasteful enterprise best terminated at the earliest possible moment. A better approach is to point out the importance of the material being studied. Then the study time in class becomes an opportunity rather than a chore.

Providing specific things to be gained from the study: that is, questions to be answered, concepts to be understood, problems to be solved, information to be collected.

Identifying clearly the reasons for study. List questions either on the blackboard or on a study-guide syllabus. For a teacher to say, "Read the next chapter and be ready to answer questions on it" is, for the average student, a very vague and almost useless kind of instruction.

Helping the students set goals regarding the time needed to accomplish the study task: that is, "Let's try to get the first five questions answered in class, and then you can continue and finish the rest at home." Remember, however, that variation in student ability will mean that much more will be accomplished by some and much less by others. Nevertheless, all students can be taught to make efficient use of the study time provided.

When study time is offered in class, individual supervision should be provided. While the students are studying in class, the teacher should:

Walk around the room to observe study habits.

Use this opportunity to discuss with individual students any problems of study that arise.

Watch how student work is going. The teacher may find it advisable to call the attention of the whole class to some particularly difficult passage or interesting point that should not be missed.

Ask students about their progress. The teacher should not wait for unfinished or consistently poor work to indicate a trouble spot.

Note different ability levels. Check with superior students regarding extra projects or reports that may be done in place of homework.

Be attentive to the class. Thus the teacher aids in creating a workmanlike atmosphere of quiet and concentration.

When the teacher has established a study routine in class and has been able to work individually with most of the students on their own particular study problems or needs, then he may utilize

this study time for individual guidance conferences as suggested in Chapter 19. Even if such conferences can occur without disturbing the class during a study period, however, it is very important that the teacher use several of the weekly study times for supervision.

How much in-class time should be allowed for study? As has been indicated, variety in a class is as important as regular routine. And neither should be sacrificed for the other. Time for study should be carefully provided for in the over-all plan, but it is important to vary the daily schedule enough so that students remain alert and interested. Establishing the practice of a weekly planning session with the class aids in allocating needed class time for study, adapting to different rates of progress by different classes over similar material, and adjusting to varying student interests. It is as unwise to have an inflexible rule of "twenty minutes every period for in-class study" as it is to have no plan for helping students develop study skills.

Additional preparation will be needed to guide out-of-class study time. Many students have not learned to plan their time well by the high school years. The teacher should discuss with the class the conditions that make for efficient home study. These should include the following:

Reviewing work in class to see what, if any, difficulties may be encountered at home and checking with the teacher for help in these areas.

Arranging a specific time and place at home for uninterrupted study. This is often not easy for young people who live in crowded or disorganized homes. Such students may need special time in class, or even a home visit to encourage parents to help the student in his study needs.

Reviewing in class, after the home study has been accomplished, any special problems that may have arisen.

Considering the importance of learning habits, of individual concentration and responsibility for one's own learning tasks, and relating of this to later vocational needs.

Providing a period in class for students to exchange experiences about the methods of study they find most helpful, so that students can help one another. Advice from a peer is often more acceptable than advice from a teacher or another adult.

SUMMARY

Because we spend so much time teaching young people, we like to think that, in years to come, they will remember some of the important details of the subjects they studied. Yet so much is forgotten! Students need help in remembering for immediate use the lessons of the classroom. They need to have readily available at least a certain minimum of concepts and facts for utilization in adult living. The teacher has at hand several important techniques that, if well used, increase the recall of material. These tools—drill and review—must be used with discrimination and with care.

Drill should be confined to separate elements that need to be available as a kind of automatic response. Review should reinforce the relationship of separate elements of learning. Some of these elements will have been drilled, and some will not.

One way of involving all students in drill procedures is to use learning games, in which students review the pertinent material, prepare the content of the quiz game, and then are alerted to see that correct answers are provided by each of the groups or teams involved. A greater use of such games is recommended, since they do increase the participation of students in drill, involve extensive and penetrating inquiry into subject matter, and are fun.

Learning how to study is essential to effective drill and review. The teacher must be constantly alert to opportunities for helping students learn how to study and for working closely with those who have special personal problems, particularly in out-of-school study assignments.

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Managing the Classroom for Effective Learning

CLASSROOMS SHOULD BE laboratories for learning—places where students and teachers experiment, try out, and test. Our great advances as a people have come about because we were willing to take the methods of science to our problems, new and old. We can assure the same kind of progress in learning if we are willing to follow a similar procedure. The basic procedure of science is to take a problem and state its limitations, collect data within these limits, formulate a hypothesis from the data, try out the hypothesis, modify the hypothesis on the basis of the try-out, and keep modifying and trying out until the hypothesis states accurately how the problem is resolved. This is a creative way of learning because it involves a constant attempt to create explanations that work. It is also a lasting way of learning because it calls upon the learner to propose his own answers, to try them out, to keep trying until the answers test out. If any of his proposals are made without care and thought, he knows he must probe just that much longer to work out the right answer. The great virtue of the scientific method of learning is that it places

responsibility for sound learning squarely upon the learner. He gets no ready-made answers.

For too long classrooms were hearing halls. Words were repeated that summarized what others had found out for themselves. This was not genuine learning; the words lay only on the surface of memory and were brushed away by the efforts of the learner to find out something he really wanted to know.

As long as classrooms were listening rooms, little equipment was needed: desks and chairs and a blackboard. Few materials were needed: the textbook, paper and pencils, pen and ink, chalk. The teachers' problems in management were few. The desks and chairs were bolted in neat rows. Each student had his book and his writing supplies. For the most part students sat, occasionally advancing to the front of the room to speak. Students spoke from their seats only when given specific permission by the teacher. The classroom was orderly and quiet—and dead.

The Teacher as Classroom Manager

As soon as the methods and outcomes of learning changed, the management problems also changed. After all, when the teacher uses a motion picture to initiate a discussion, he has to arrange for a darkened room, a projector, projectionist, the arrival of the film at the right time, the rearrangement of seating so that all can see. These new management problems are the direct outcome of new content, new materials, new understandings of the way genuine learning takes place.

In previous chapters we have discussed audio-visual materials, community resources, group work, role-playing, newer concepts of drill and review. All these approaches to teaching and learning necessitate active student participation. You may have wondered just how a teacher could keep so many activities operating smoothly. Frankly, it is not easy. The newer methods do demand more talent for organization than does the read-recite-test approach to teaching. It is only honest to report that for every beginning teacher who is a good manager of learning, there is another who is a fine scholar

himself but struggles dismally with the details of organization and routine.

Why do some beginners find management difficult? One reason is clear. Few inexperienced teachers have spent much time in well-managed classrooms devoted to many kinds of activities. A canvass of your own prior experience may show that your classrooms were dominated by a different tradition, where even the intrusion of a motion picture was unusual. Even if you were fortunate enough to experience a variety of procedures within the same class, you may have been as unaware of the management problems as those whose experience was more limited. In either case, it is natural that management skill should not be very well developed.

Moving from Here to There

How do you overcome the conditioning of years so that you can utilize a wider variety of classroom procedures efficiently? Newer methods are, in part, a matter of attitude and of content selection; in part, a matter of understanding adolescents and your own role as a teacher. But they are also a matter of management. You may accept the proposition that individuals learn some things better in small groups. But how do you set up groups? Who moves the chairs? Where do you get the extra references? What supplies do you need? Some of these questions were answered when we examined the possibilities on group work in the classroom. Other questions of administrative detail we shall analyze now.

It is to be expected that the new teacher should feel somewhat ill at ease in a room full of adolescents just because *he* is new and just because they are adolescents. It is even more understandable that he should be uncertain when he contemplates classroom procedures that permit these unknown quantities to move freely around the room. How can he be sure that they won't start a scuffle, friendly or otherwise, en route to the dictionary? How does he know that they will work diligently on a problem in a group and not spend the time flirting and gossiping? Well, he doesn't know unless he tries. And the prospect may seem frightening indeed!

But there is this reassurance. You need not take on all management burdens at once. No one attempts figure eights on ice skates until he is sure that he can keep his ankles straight. And he will learn how to do just plain ordinary skating before he tries any fancy figures. So it is in teaching. Before the teacher tries classroom methods that involve extensive management problems, he develops a feeling of fairly firm mastery of the ordinary classroom routines.

There is nothing magical about moving from limited to psychologically sounder methods of teaching. Mastery can be attained only by moving *gradually* from simpler toward more complex ways of working.

I tried the group methods that were suggested in my methods course during my second month of student teaching. And what a mess I had on my hands! We didn't have enough textbooks, and since the students were sharing them anyway, I just went ahead and said for them to work in groups. What a chattering mob they were! All pretense at serious study ceased, and they had a gay old time. I was glad the period was almost over because I really flopped that time.

Here is a case of attempting a newer method too soon. We are agreed that students profit from group work, but the first experience does require considerable preplanning. A beginner simply should not attempt spur-of-the-moment group work. It may not always fail, but the odds are too high that it will.

If you can manage to get the roll taken efficiently and effectively at the beginning of the hour, if you can return test papers with little confusion, if you can distribute and collect equipment and supplies in a speedy and orderly way, if you can stop whatever you are doing because of an interruption from the office and not have complete chaos, then you have mastered the essentials of good management. And you are ready for more variety in classroom routines. Now you may introduce a motion picture, have a resource visitor, plan a short-run group experience, send part of the class to the library, plan a field trip, discuss problems of discipline and control with the class.

It is important to underline this thesis that ability to manage grows gradually. We suspect that you may still be somewhat skeptical. If it is so easy to move from traditional to modern methods, you

may ask, why don't we see more of the latter used in the classrooms we visit? We hope that we can suggest some convincing answers. Some teachers adhere to the more conventional methods because they have not achieved a basic sense of security in classroom management. They are still afraid that they will have complete chaos if they once shift the focus from the teacher to the learning problem. Some teachers remain unconvinced that the newer methods achieve true learning goals. Some are familiar only with older methods of instruction. Some school administrators do not encourage departures from familiar patterns. Again, a teacher may have several unfortunate experiences and refuse to try again.

Surely none of these reasons should persuade a beginning teacher never to venture at all. It is our conviction, based on observation of, and close working with, many student teachers and teachers in service, that, once the essentials of management are mastered, you can move slowly and surely toward a genuine learning laboratory in your classroom.

Before They Get There

A classroom is very much like a home. We can walk into a house and feel immediately that a warm and friendly family lives there. It is not necessarily new and shiny, equipped with the latest gadgets, but it invites conversation and relaxation. Another house seems cold and rigid, almost as if "do not touch" signs were everywhere. Still another may be in complete disorder, with everything out of place and nothing systematic in evidence. As youngsters enter a classroom, they sense almost immediately the kind of spirit that prevails.

It was the first day of school. Mrs. Thomas brought Anne to school because she was new in the district. It was bound to be a rather difficult day. The office efficiently informed them of the room to which Anne would be assigned. The school was spick-and-span. The halls were shiny. It wasn't a new building, nor was it old and worn. When they found Anne's room, the class was busy at some task, filling out cards. Anne was greeted by the teacher, who gave her a seat and a card to fill out. When Mrs. Thomas left, Anne gave her mother a small desperate look. What a bleak room it was! Mrs.

Thomas had a sinking feeling as she left her daughter. The walls were a schoolhouse brown. Sepia prints of Washington and Lincoln adorned the front wall, high above the blackboard. A flag drooped in the corner. A file cabinet stood by the teacher's desk, on which there were two textbooks. And that was all there was in the room except for the students and the teacher.

I can still remember my first impression of Mr. Glass's room. I hated the old school when I had first passed it. It looked like a prison or a factory where children were exploited. But the shock when one was inside! And it wasn't just the room that Mr. Glass had for mathematics. It was the whole place. But his room was my first intimation that this school, far from being the prison it looked like outside, was a tremendously exciting experience inside. Now what would you do in a math room? There were pictures on the wall—pictures drawn from mathematical formulas, of all things. Some extraordinary models were arranged in an inviting way on a back table. There were magazine racks with several mathematics journals there for browsing. A bookcase was full of books related to mathematics—and there was no glass door on it. There were several boxes of green plants growing at the windows. Some gay travel posters enlivened the high, dim walls. Even the flag seemed to ripple with special freshness in that atmosphere.

First impressions *are* important. They are important when we meet people, and they are important when we enter a classroom. When you next walk into a classroom, think to yourself, "Would I like to be in this room every day for an hour for a whole school year?" Color engineers have told us that it makes a difference in factories to have some colors rather than others, to surround workers with a pleasant and workmanlike atmosphere. The same is true of adolescents. The first concern, then, of the teacher as a manager is to see the room as a setting that invites students to work and learn, rather than a place that repels and depresses them.

As is evident from the anecdote above, one does not need new schools to have inviting rooms. Of course, a fine new school helps. Colors are used to lighten and relax. Polished wood cabinets contribute to a warm atmosphere. Drapes soften windows and add color and variety. The furniture is designed for appearance as well as for comfort. Perhaps you will be fortunate enough to teach in one of the newer schools; if so, you start with an initial advantage.

But new school or old, you can make your room a pleasant place

to be. You can help yourself by maintaining a cordial and respectful relationship with the custodial staff. Many a young teacher has needlessly added to his troubles by treating the custodian in a high-handed, discourteous manner. He finds himself the victim of little reprisals: the wastebasket not emptied, the chalkboard not washed, furniture neatly arranged in exactly the wrong way. But treated as a friend, the custodian can make the teacher's life more pleasant in innumerable ways.

It is a great help, of course, if the teacher is assigned to the same room for all of his classes. As our schools become more and more crowded and schedules are tightened, however, it is not always possible for each teacher to have his own room. Sometimes a teacher may have most of his classes in one room, then "float" for several periods, and have to share his own room during his free period. This certainly narrows interest in room arrangement. To intensify the problem, students also feel displaced. In addition, interpersonal problems among a faculty may be aggravated because of having to share rooms. One teacher is compulsive about neatness and order, whereas another has a mighty disregard for such mundane matters. A compromise must be reached, and it must be one that puts the welfare of the students first. You must seek agreements with the teachers with whom you share rooms. You need an understanding about procedures for making the room attractive, about storage and display facilities for each class, about shelf space for reference material.

Whether it is your fault or not, a disorderly room breeds disorderly conduct. Even if you must do more than your share, you must help your school invite good order.

A consultant to a junior high school was walking down the hall with one of the central office staff. Suddenly the visiting dignitary stooped and pushed back a piece of metal that protruded below a locker. As they went down the stairs he poked with his shoe at a big hole in the linoleum. A broken window with tape ineffectually keeping the sagging ends together next caught his eye. The door to the classrooms swung on broken hinges.

After a pregnant silence he finally voiced his feelings: "I seem to remember that Redl, in his research with delinquent youngsters, made a point about disturbance contagion. He said that not only did the excitement generated by a child serve as a point of infection

*for other susceptible children, but chaotic environments were also sources of infection and produced chaotic behavior in youngsters. How can we expect young adolescents to be disciplined and self-respecting when we put them in environments which are disturbing and dislocating?"*¹

The comment made by the consultant (a child psychologist) serves to remind us that four walls and a door mean a great deal more than just a room. They convey feelings and impressions that serve to reassure or disturb. We cannot be complacent about "mere classrooms"; they are an intimate part of the total learning environment.

Order in the Classroom

It may seem obvious to say that the prime rule guiding the teacher in the organization of his classroom is "a place for everything and everything in its place." It is a sad day when the chemistry teacher plans a certain experiment but can't find the necessary chemicals. Or when the English instructor plans a lesson around a particularly apt descriptive paragraph but somehow can't locate the book. Or when the history teacher promises to produce a map showing the division of Europe prior to World War I but no one can find the one that everyone knows is somewhere in the room. These frustrations are the result of poor management, poor housekeeping. And they can add up to extremely poor teaching.

Somehow, obvious as this may seem, there are many classrooms in which the needed items are simply not available. Lost, strayed, or stolen? No one knows. It is a useful habit to make a daily check before school opens to be sure that the room and its materials are neat and in order, ready for another day's work.

There are several places that seem to collect clutter by a kind of perverse private magnetism. One is the teacher's desk. Another is the top of the file. Still another is the bookcase. A teacher needs to be particularly careful to keep his desk neat. Not a model of rigid order, with never a paper a hair's breadth out of alignment,

¹ Fritz Redl, *Children Who Hate* (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1951).

but a place where he can quickly and easily find the class roll book, the text, an extra sharp pencil, a piece of scratch paper. A teacher's desk is a revealing item. A messy desk is almost always an indicator of a messy teacher. Students become uneasy when a desk is piled high with carelessly strewn papers. "Why hand in careful work here?" they say to themselves. "This teacher obviously doesn't treat it with care." And sooner or later a substitute will appear on the scene, and then it is indeed an embarrassment.

We must admit that habits of tidiness may not be the natural thing for many of our fellow teachers. But truly they make for an easier life; they mean one less classroom battle to fight. As William James observed, it would be a major tragedy of life if every time one went to brush one's teeth, one had to make a decision about doing so. Habits help, and you do well to start early to develop habits of classroom order in terms of inanimate objects, which you can control with a fair amount of ease. Then you are free to devote your full time and attention to the animate objects—the students—who sometimes prove a little more resistant!

Instructional Routines: Seating, Attendance, Records

Even for experienced teachers, the first days with a new class can be hectic. Students and teacher both have a host of adjustments to make. In a sense, a new social organization is being born, and it is inevitably attended by some pain. For these days, well-planned routine is imperative, since impressions are being formed and exchanged by the students that may help or hinder the teaching process long afterward. Sometimes it helps to be at or near the door of the classroom before class begins and to make a deliberate effort to speak to some of the students by name. This shows from the beginning a recognition of individuality. A quick briefing on activities in which class members are engaged in and out of school may suggest impromptu remarks to be made to students. Of course, these casual conversations need not be limited to before and after class; whenever and wherever class members are seen, they should be recognized and

something said to give them assurance that the teacher knows them personally. Just a few bonds established in the first days provide a framework around which the social organization can take form. It is while the social organization of the class remains amorphous that there is danger of chaos.

In every high school classroom in the country, at the opening of each hour, there is one prime order of business: seating students and taking roll. But how would you plan to seat students the first day of school or of any class?

There are several possibilities, and each has its consequences:

Seating Plan

Seat all students alphabetically.

Let students sit where they wish.

Seat students according to size or special problem, such as vision or hearing defect.

Consequences

This procedure helps one learn students' names. It is fair; no one need complain. It is likely to separate cliques and best friends. Of course, students whose names are at the end of the alphabet always sit in the rear (or front).

With this procedure you can quickly see the social organization of the classroom. Cliques and groups emerge; isolates can be spotted; friends like to be close together. But students will not sit in front seats. Troublemakers often sit near each other. Students do not extend the friendship range.

Smaller students sit in front so that they can see, as do students with glasses or a hearing deficiency. But seating all the big boys in the rear may spell trouble.

Experienced teachers are likely to advocate one or another method of seating students. But each, as you can see, has some advantages and some disadvantages. Unless you find good reason to the contrary, you might begin with the free-choice system. True, you should take into account particular physical needs of youngsters as soon as they become apparent. But for the first few days, you may find it advantageous to allow youngsters to sit where they

please. What about the noisy cliques? This is something you need to know about. Once they are identified, you have learned something valuable about the social structure of your room. You will be apprised at once of the hazards as you work with the class to develop self-discipline.

The other great advantage of the free-choice system is, of course, this: Students, like other people, do prefer to be next to people they know and like. When you go to a lecture or a movie, isn't it more pleasant to sit next to a friend? If it is dull, you can exchange sympathetic nudges; if it is exciting and interesting, you can share fleeting smiles or comments of appreciation. So it is with adolescents. Even if they do not talk to their neighbor, it is just plain easier to get the work done if this person is someone they like and know. For this very human, very understandable reason, then, adolescents may react more positively to free choice than to any imposed seating arrangement.

During the first days of the school year your major task is learning the names of students. If you have established that students may sit where they please, then you will want to request that these seats be retained during the early weeks of the class. A seating chart is a must at this time. You can make a plan of the room, showing the desks, and have each student write his name in the appropriate square.

Let us look at this problem of learning names for a moment. What is a name? It is, in a sense, the person. It is his official tag. In primitive societies, "real" names are so important that they are often kept secret lest evil spirits cast a spell upon the person. In some cultures an individual does not get a "real" name until puberty, when he is recognized as a "real" person. Names are just as vital in our culture, though we often overlook this fact. Your name means *you*. Many teachers find it hard to learn the names of one hundred and sixty-five students in one day or even in one week or one month. But this is one task to which you should devote your full energy early in the school year. The sooner you know all the names of all your students, the sooner will your many routine and teaching tasks become a matter of working with individuals rather than with bodies. All students respond to this very quickly. Each of us wants to be

known as an entity, unique and special, and it is by our name that we are told that others do view us in this way.

As you now see, taking roll and seating students have ramifications beyond mere management. After a seating chart is made, use it! Students will not mind if you refer to the seating chart when you call on them. But do you call them *Miss Jones* and *Mr. Smith*? Or is it *Nancy* and *Robert*? Different sections of the country and different school levels have different procedures. Sometimes practice differs from class to class; an English teacher may call all students by their first names, but a physical education teacher may use last names only. If you have freedom to do as you wish, be careful about first names. Do not use them until you find the form preferred. Horace may prefer *Butch*, and Antoinette may wish to be called *Tony*.

Correct pronunciation is a help. Remember the way the students teased Mr. Dadier in *Blackboard Jungle* (and if you don't remember, you may well want to read this novel)? They called him "Daddy-oh," and used it as a weapon with which to "get" him. Teachers wish to be called by their proper name, correctly pronounced. So do students. Many students will have "strange" names—as do teachers. You will want to make a firm effort to pronounce names correctly.

Keeping Careful Records

Let's get back now to the matter of taking roll. Who will take it, and how? During the first days of school, you will want to take the roll yourself. This is an invaluable aid in learning the names of the many students who flock in and out of your classes. The importance of taking roll is clearly appreciated by all experienced teachers; beginning teachers may not know how crucial this procedure can be. The daily attendance roster is, in most states, the basis on which funds are allocated to a given school district. It is vital to know who is in school, and for how long. Unless a careful and complete roll is taken, the school authorities cannot know who is truant, nor put the proper machinery in motion to find out why the student is not in school. There are few things more disturbing

to an administrator than a teacher who does not complete his attendance check accurately and promptly. Different schools have different procedures regarding the attendance count. Typically, each teacher makes a check of attendance and posts at the door a list of all those absent when the period started. This chore is expected to be accomplished during the very first few moments of each class.

What kind of attendance procedures work best? The seating chart, as we have indicated, is a great help during the early days of the semester. An empty seat indicates an absent member. The question arises, however, how long students have to stay in the seats they chose at the beginning of the semester. As soon as you learn to manage any degree of flexibility in class arrangements, you will permit, and indeed encourage, shifting of seats. Then your first seating chart will be of no use. Reading aloud a roll is time-consuming. Unless you check each voice that says "Present," some wise adolescent may answer for his or her friend. It has been suggested that students sign a roster; the same possibility is present, however—someone may sign for someone else. It is also reported on very good authority that students have signed in some fantastic creatures. So these methods may not work very well.

The use of student assistants is recommended as one effective way of taking a roll call. To assure accuracy, two students may be assigned this task. By rotating the job arbitrarily through the class, the question of favoritism is eliminated. Students may also enter into the teacher's roll book a check to indicate who is absent on a given day. In many schools the teacher must sign an "admit" slip for students who have been absent and bring in a valid excuse. An "excused" absence can be made up by doing the work missed; an "unexcused" absence presumably is one that merits an "F" or a zero in the teacher's book. These grades must be recorded if used. Different schools have different policies, which you must know about and by which you must abide.

We have mentioned the roll book. In many schools the teacher is issued an "official" roll book. Here he enters the names of all students, preferably alphabetically, with a page for each class. If student assistants take the roll and enter attendance reports, you will want to have two roll books—one for attendance and one for

grades and other data. It is not wise to give students ready access to personal material about other students.

The roll book in which you record your students' grades is a very important document. Here you keep the record of returned assignments, test grades, final examination grades—all the many items on which a final grade is to be based. A neat roll book not only is a great help to a teacher in his own duties; it has other functions as well. A parent may come to protest a grade his child has received, and you may have to produce the roll book to show on exactly what evidence you based the grade. A messy, smudged roll book, with hit-or-miss entries, will not help you defend the validity of the grade assigned. This record has some of the attributes of a public record. The grade you gave cannot—and will not—be changed by anyone unless it can be proved that you deliberately distorted the evidence. Part of your management routine, then, is learning to keep a roll book and to enter in it the data you need to make an evaluation of students. It will help to keep old roll books for several years. You may be asked to make a recommendation to an employer regarding a former student. By checking the roll book, you may be able to recall the kind of work this person did and make a responsible reply.

What other material would you include in a roll book? One of our great needs in secondary education is to know more about the many students we must meet and teach daily. It is suggested (see Chapter 19) that you gather some personal data about each student through a questionnaire. In addition, you can find in the cumulative records in the main office or the counselor's office reports of standardized tests taken by your students. These provide information that you should value. But how can you really make use of it? It is suggested that as soon as you get the roster of the students in your class, you try to obtain their test scores and transfer them to your own roll book. Because it is always possible that some curious adolescent will find your grade book when you are out of the room, you should record confidential items, such as standardized test scores, in code. You may, for example, devise a letter code whereby high scores are designated by an "X" and low scores by an "M."

Let us now move on. You have the class seated, you have

learned names, and you have taken roll. What other management problems will you face?

Classroom Logistics

During a war the commanding officer must make sure that the troops have the supplies they need when they need them. The classroom requires as careful a tending to the problem of logistics.

Each subject has its own supply problems, and each school has established procedures by which supplies are obtained. In some schools there may be a supply clerk, who issues material to you when requisitioned on the proper blanks. Sometimes the amount of a given item that you can obtain is limited by a departmental budget, and all requisitions must be approved by the department head or area supervisor or building principal. Sometimes, in smaller schools, the supplies are open to any teacher to take. Certain supplies, for such subjects as science, art, home economics, and industrial arts, may be expensive and take a long time to obtain once they are exhausted.

As you start your teaching, then, you will want to check on the supplies available. An inventory may or may not be on hand. A personal check is essential. Is the chemistry supply room adequate for the experiments you want to do? Are the microscopes in working order? What about the typewriters, the sewing machines, the welding equipment? Not only will you want to check on supplies on hand and on the source and possibilities for new ones, but you will want to investigate on the whole area of repair and maintenance. What if a sewing machine breaks down? Who repairs it, how, and at what cost? The supply of textbooks and the replacement of worn books is a concern of every academic teacher. Rules vary with each school district. It is well to be informed about the details of textbook supply in your own area.

Among the audio-visual materials, motion pictures most often present requisitioning problems. Usually the films must be ordered long in advance of the date on which they will be used. Teachers who plan instruction with their students will have difficulty predict-

ing just when a motion picture may be needed. Compromises will be inevitable. But better compromises can be effected if it is known at the beginning of the school year just how and when films may be requested. Larger high schools may have an audio-visual coordinator to assist with the scheduling. Even if they do, however, the coordinator will appreciate the teacher's familiarity with the catalog of the principal supply sources for the school, the necessary requisition forms, and the other required administrative procedures.

Many audio-visual materials require equipment: projectors, recorders, playbacks. Most, if not all, of the equipment will also require advance scheduling. A quick way for the new teacher to become unpopular is to remember just before class time that he must have a piece of equipment. Although many schools have student service clubs which distribute and operate the equipment, it is advantageous for the teacher himself to know how the equipment is operated. This knowledge, contrary to a common teacher complaint, is not difficult to acquire. In a few hours' time, any teacher should be able to operate any of the school's audio-visual equipment.

Your Classroom in Action

Let us assume that it is 8:15 on a Monday morning. You have planned to give a test during your second period, review the text material during the third period, work on group projects during the fourth, etc. What supplies will be needed for each activity? Extra papers for the test? Pencils for the inevitable few who forget? A few extra texts for the same reason? Colored paper, crayons, tracing paper, magazines for the group projects?

The classes come in. You have assured yourself that you have the necessary materials to do the job at hand. How do you get the paper and the pencil, the books, the crayons, the paper, the magazines to the students as they need them? The object is to do it efficiently and easily, in a minimum of time and with a minimum of confusion.

It is at this point that a strong case can be made for student assistants. With a modicum of direction, a few students can pass out the paper, pencils, books, and other supplies while you are discussing with the class the lesson that is to come. Too often a good

half of the time of such laboratory classes as chemistry, biology, physics, art, and mechanical drawing is consumed in simply getting the material to the students at the beginning of the period and collecting it again at the end. Such a use of time is difficult to defend; it cheats the students of vital instruction; it is an indication of poor management. You will want to make sure that the logistics of your classroom are carried out with the efficiency of a good military operation.

There are ways of helping yourself in these matters. A storage cabinet, properly used, is a great aid. Here papers of various kinds can be kept, along with related material. Students, assisted by labels on shelves and drawers, can keep the supplies in order. The bookcase should shelve currently used references. A simple check-out system can be organized so that books are circulated as needed. No file cabinets? No bookcases? The time-honored orange crate can serve as an excellent bookcase. A sturdy apple box is just the right size for storage. Crude as these may be, they hold supplies and are better than either a disorganized mess stacked in a corner or no supplies at all.

Newer classrooms are built to hold many kinds of materials. There are drawers to hold different sizes of paper; magazine racks; regular and legal-sized file drawers; large cabinets for storing models and maps. These facilities are indeed a boon to the teacher, but they are still the exception rather than the rule. So you may have to improvise. Remember that students can be helpful in working out storage facilities, as well as in issuing and controlling supplies.

A useful activity for one of the first days is to distribute duplicated statements describing basic routines of the class (distributing and collecting materials, forms for reports, checking out reference books, and so on). The statements should be regarded as a basis for discussion. It should be understood that the routines may be modified as the class devises more efficient procedures. Sometimes a group can be appointed immediately to codify management patterns to be presented later to the class. *The more routines are devised by the class, the better they will be observed.*

From time to time, during this discussion of instructional routines, we have mentioned student assistants. Wisely used, they can relieve teachers of the supervision of much necessary routine.

This use of students need not be exploitation. It is a part of sharing in responsibility for learning, which students should have. Many will gain status and develop maturity from the experience. Because it is an educative experience, student assistance should be rotated. It should not be the exclusive property of the academically gifted. Nor should it gain the reputation of being awarded to the teacher's favorites. The responsibility enjoyed by any one student should be limited both in scope and in time, and division of responsibility among the assistants should be clear. Students themselves should have a voice in who does the jobs, what the responsibilities are, and how long they should be enjoyed.

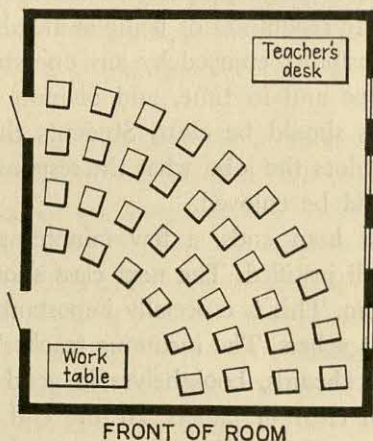
Before the class hour ends, a few minutes spent in general housekeeping are well justified. The next class should come into a neat and orderly room. This is especially important when the room is shared by several teachers. The incoming teacher's morale will be helped by clean blackboards, bookshelves in good order, chairs or desks in place, floor clear of papers. At the end of the day, the custodian will be appreciative. Furthermore, the beginning teacher will earn a reputation for being a good manager.

Room Arrangement

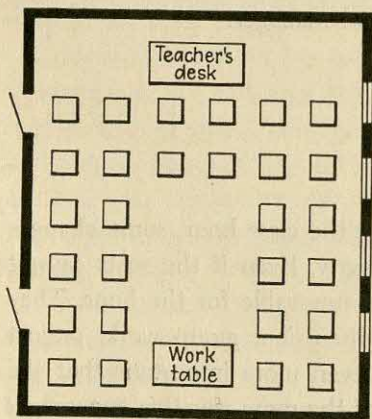
For the different activities during the class hour, some changes in seating arrangements will be necessary. Even if the seats cannot be moved, the students need not be immovable for the hour. They can and should move—to facilitate discussion, group work, project and study activities. Of course, it is even more important that the teacher not be fastened to the front of the room, for this encourages the old recite-for-the-teacher pattern. Where there is space, the teacher's desk is best moved to the rear of the room; supervision is more efficient from this vantage point, private conversations with students are facilitated, and teacher domination of the classroom is less to be expected. If the furniture is movable and the class is working as one group, seats may be arranged in quarter circles facing away from the windows from left front to right rear, so that no one has a direct light glare. In small-group activity, work around tables

or at desks arranged in squares or circles is, of course, most efficient, because face-to-face working fosters group unity. The diagrams below illustrate some possible room arrangements.

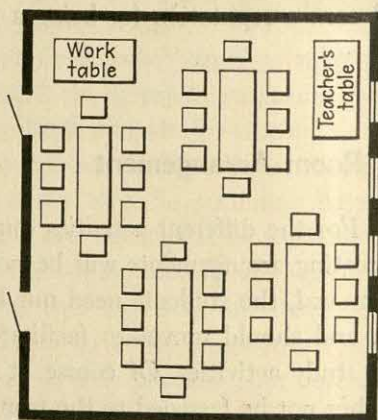
SUGGESTED ROOM ARRANGEMENTS



FRONT OF ROOM



FRONT OF ROOM



FRONT OF ROOM

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

We can arrive at several useful generalizations from our discussion of good management in the laboratory classroom. These may guide you in developing your own classroom routines.

The development of habits of good management and of sharing

responsibility is an important part of good education. Teachers and students together should agree on those details of instruction that should be made matters of routine.

Routines are useful when they help teachers and students do common tasks with economy of effort and a minimum of confusion, when teachers and students understand why the routines are advantageous, and when they free teacher and students for major activities.

The greater the maturity of the group, the greater its responsibility for establishing and maintaining routines should be.

The larger the class, the more necessary good management procedures are.

The classroom that looks neat and is well arranged helps induce habits of good management.

Basic routines must be begun the first day the class meets, in order that the expectation of good order will be developed at once.

Teachers and students should limit themselves to basic routines at the beginning, adding procedures as they are needed. Too many rules may induce rather than reduce disorder.

All the work of the class must not become mechanical routine. Teachers and students should not hold to such rigid patterns that they know exactly what will happen at a given time every day. Individual initiative and creative learning will be destroyed by too much routine.

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Slow and Fast Learners

HAVE YOU EVER known a “typical” person? A “normal” person? Certainly you do not consider yourself “average.” These phrases can be applied only to persons in the abstract. Whenever you know someone by sight and name, you soon see that he is really unique. As a teacher, you will be confronted with this basic fact about people every hour of the day. Your classroom will be composed of some thirty or more special, separate, unique individuals, each in some measure deviating from the “typical” or “normal.”

Often the deviation from the typical or normal is merely that which makes one person different from some other person. In some cases, however, the deviation is extreme. Although the concept of normal or typical is an abstraction, there is still an important area of “normality” within which most of us live. Those who do not fall within this range find it difficult to perform the tasks set by the school or to meet the school’s expectations with respect to behavior and learning.

Dealing with these individuals is one of the major tasks of the teacher. Most students progress as expected, perform when asked, and in general move easily through the routine and years of school. But in every classroom you will find individual students who do not fit into the normal range. What do you do then? Some guides to

action are discussed in this and the two following chapters. Each considers some of the ways in which students depart from the norm and thus become special classroom problems: *first*, students who are very fast or very slow learners; *second*, students who are deficient in the basic communication skills; and *third*, students who find it extremely difficult to live peaceably in the classroom or school.

What It Feels Like to Be Different

What does it feel like to be very different from others? We can only understand how a very different youngster behaves if we know how he feels about his "difference." It is often his feeling about himself that makes him act as he does. Fortunately, we do have research to describe the psychological climate in which this youth may live:

All students who deviate markedly from the norm feel conspicuous. If the student is exceptionally bright, exceptionally slow, or is markedly behind in his school performance, he feels that everyone else is aware of his difference. Consequently, these students are often either very aggressive, as though to say, "I'll tell you all about myself before you can find out," or very shy and retiring, as though to shrink into a psychological corner where nobody can really see them. In either case, the shyness or aggression should receive minimal reaction from the teacher. The teacher should do his best to handle the fast or slow learner as if that learner were acting just like everybody else.

All individuals who are different from the majority are more sensitive than the average. Even the very dull student is likely to respond in an unexpected way to what he considers *undue* attention. This heightened sensitivity is also to be found among students from minority groups, and in many ways those with special problems react very much like individuals in a minority group. The teacher, aware of this feeling on the part of the student, often overreacts. In the same way, the teacher is likely to be too kind to a Negro student in an attempt to show that he does not really bear the student any prejudice. Yet this excessive kindness is not accepted by the person toward whom it is directed. Another parallel illustration may be

seen in a study of injured veterans.¹ The research showed in part that the injured individual wanted most of all to have others face his injuries realistically. If he were blind or crippled, he did not want others to ignore this condition, but neither did he want pity because he was handicapped.

Any kind of exceptional endowment has significant repercussions in the whole life of the student. Both very bright and very dull students pose special problems to their own families. Often these students have been overprotected by their parents, who have sought to smooth the path for them. This sort of treatment may be all very well in the home, but the total effect on the individual is to keep him a child far longer than his classmates.²

At the other extreme are those young people whose parents have found their "difference" more of an irritant than anything else. The difficult task of parents with a slow-learning child, for example, is to accept his mental deficiency and still give him as much love as any other child in the family. Unquestionably, these students are more trouble at home. Some parents respond by rejecting and neglecting them. This in turn may result in serious personality repercussions in the slow learner. The teacher, therefore, will want to gain insight into the home situation of all such children in order to see clearly how they have been treated by their parents.

The goals for the normal child may not seem appropriate to exceptionally fast or exceptionally slow students. The teacher who suggests life choices that presume a normal endowment will sometimes be perplexed because some students react so negatively to what appear to be very reasonable aspirations. Yet the rationale of the reaction is clear. These aspirations are felt to be either completely beyond their scope or beneath their abilities. The very superior student, for example, may scorn what appear to be very low-level ambitions. Motivation of these students is directly affected by goal-setting. Thus, the teacher who has exceptional students should study them intensively as individuals to help them set goals they can accept as reasonable.

¹ Army Medical Research and Development Board, "Social Psychological Rehabilitation of the Physically Handicapped: Adjustment to Misfortune," Final Report, April 1, 1948 (Washington, D. C.: Office of the Surgeon General, War Department, 1948).

² National Society for the Study of Education, "Parents' Problems with Exceptional Children," in *The Education of Exceptional Children*, Forty-ninth Yearbook, Part II (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1950).

The General Problem of Slow and Fast Learners

As you know, the more complete a representation you have of any group of people, the more "normally" are their achievements distributed. If you retain in school all of a given age group, you will have achievement all the way from very low to very high. There is no way to eliminate this range unless you eliminate the people who rank very high or very low. Whether it is playing a violin, throwing a football, or reading a book, all people simply *cannot* make the same progress in the same amount of time. Some will take less time; some will take more. Even with this tolerance, some may never reach the heights others climb quickly.

As a beginning teacher, you might think of your own capacities. Where does your greatest weakness lie? In physical dexterity? In the fine arts? Now think of some fellow student teacher who is very skilled in the area where you are weak. Could you ever, no matter how hard you tried, reach the same degree of proficiency?

If you retain all children in school, you have two choices: (1) to require that all children attain the same minimal degree of proficiency in the same amount of time, retaining for additional time those who can not attain this standard; or (2) to expect differences in achievement and gear instruction to these differences while keeping students of the same age together.

In general, American elementary schools follow the second alternative. In the present decade, with swollen enrollments aggravating already difficult problems, this practice will be hotly assailed and as warmly defended. Whatever the arguments advanced, it is highly unlikely that the procedure will soon be changed. As a beginning teacher, you must expect varying achievement at the same grade level.³

Very often the group made up of extremes in learning ability creates the most difficult discipline problems. No student likes to be bored, and a student who cannot do what the others are doing will be bored. If the material is too hard for the slow student to grasp, he will, unfortunately, often molest other students, annoy the teacher, or keep himself busy in some other undesirable fashion.

³ James J. Jones, "Recent Trends in Promotional Theory," *Progressive Education*, 33:5-6, January 1956.

Similarly, the very bright student, who has been able to do all the work in half the time it takes the other students, will look for new interests. Some very good students have actually been kept from promotion because of their "bad behavior"; yet these students were behavior problems only because their high intelligence was not properly guided.

The teacher may very well be able to handle the discipline problem of the dull child by means of either intimidation or busy-work. But these tactics do not provide such children with the special preparation that each needs for his future role in society. The slow student who sees no chance to be a useful citizen may become delinquent. Although not all delinquents are retarded or dull children, a majority has failed in school, and many are below average in mental ability. Experiences in the classroom may be helping to produce delinquents.

To the very bright student, the teacher has an even more urgent social responsibility. Many of the leaders in business, the professions, and government will be drawn from the ranks of superior students. The world can never have enough people with trained intelligence. Those with the ability to lead must be helped to develop the qualities of responsible leadership. It is not enough to keep the bright child busy; he needs to understand his social obligation and the right uses of his intellect for the good of all.

To Group or Not to Group

One of the issues most bitterly debated in educational circles is that of grouping secondary students by ability. The arguments on either side are persuasive, depending on your bias. Since research is limited, personal feelings have relatively free rein.

At one extreme of the discussion, there is virtual agreement. Students with very low IQ's can hardly work in the regular high school atmosphere. Usually such children have been put in special classes during their elementary years, and with special teachers and equipment have been given as much instruction as they can comprehend. What is to happen to them after they reach the equivalent

of eighth grade in chronological years is not so clear. Few school systems make provision for students of high school age who have a real mental deficiency. Similarly, children with marked physical handicaps are rarely found in the regular classroom. The blind, deaf, spastic, brain-damaged, or extremely crippled children are taught either at home or in special schools or classes.

But what we do find in the regular classroom are all the rest of the children. The IQ range may be from 70 to 165 plus. The reading range may be from near-illiteracy to mature reading ability—and all in one class. It is no exaggeration to say that at any given time a tenth-grade teacher may be teaching youngsters whose intellectual development and concomitant skills range from fifth grade to the college level.

Some selection occurs, of course. The academic courses often intimidate the slower students, so that they choose the commercial, shop, or “general” courses of study. The bright students gravitate toward college-preparatory courses. Self-selection does not always work as completely as one might wish, however. Some students are doggedly enrolled in a college-preparatory curriculum when their capacities are far below those required for success. And in the smaller high schools, where there are neither students nor enough teachers to establish separate courses of study, this kind of selection cannot occur.

The answer in the larger schools, say some, is to group students by ability. These arguments are advanced: Ability grouping reduces the range of teaching and learning problems faced by any one teacher. Slow, average, and fast sections can be established and materials and assignments selected to meet the specific needs of each group. The duller students are not exposed to the frustration of continual failure, which is their lot when they are pitted against students with superior abilities. The bright students can go as fast as they are able and investigate some of the exciting byways that make learning a real adventure. And the average students can move along at a feasible pace.

The opponents of ability grouping claim that it is “undemocratic” because, in adult life, people are not segregated by ability. The rationale for this position is not so simple as it may appear. Actually, in adult life, we may live rather separated existences. College-

educated persons do not typically have intimate work or personal relationships with persons of grade-school education. In what sense, then, is a heterogeneous class more "democratic" than a homogeneous one? In the sense that it does provide a *living*, not merely academic, understanding of how all kinds of people think and *feel* about their common problems as people in a democratic society. Such a society is based on the thesis that all citizens, whatever their ability, have a right to participate in its major decisions. The vote of the very fast learner and the vote of the very slow count equally.

If this advocacy of *some* common classes for all students is to merit support, the experience should develop respect and appreciation for difference in ability. Only too often, in a heterogeneous class, the slower students learn to despise the bright, and the bright learn to scorn the dull. The *way* a teacher utilizes the differences in ability makes the difference in what students learn about themselves and one another.

Nor should we neglect the point that respect and appreciation must extend to differences other than intellectual. We seem to be talking about intellectual differences only when we talk about homogeneous versus heterogeneous classrooms. Yet this is only one of the important differences among people. Some people are very talented musically; should they be in special classes in English and mathematics? What about people with superb gifts in art and design? Is this not a good basis for separation? Obviously, you would not agree that either of these talents would be an adequate basis for separate classes—in *all subjects*. But we do have special classes for the musically and artistically gifted. Thus we do permit differences to be expressed—through choice of subject matter. In the same way, we can talk sensibly about gross differences in intellectual competence. The kinds of *choices* that are provided for the student body do, in themselves, tend to reduce heterogeneity. Obviously, those without special mathematical aptitude are not going to take trigonometry. Nor will the artistically illiterate sign up for advanced advertising art.

Thus our system of electives, though far from perfect in its operation, does tend to make high school classrooms progressively more homogeneous. In the basic courses, those required of all students, we may still be faced with the controversy. Why shouldn't the academic, college-preparatory students be in English IV together,

instead of taking their advanced English with the slow and the mediocre? In some schools this is done. The course of study chosen automatically places a student in all classes with those who have a similar vocational goal. All the commercial students are assigned to the same English or social studies classes. All vocational students likewise take their required courses together.

The limitations as well as the advantages of this kind of organization have been argued in the professional literature. Some teachers feel that the separation makes the academic students into snobs while the vocational, commercial, and general students feel socially inferior. "Doesn't the same thing happen in a mixed classroom?" ask the proponents. "But it doesn't have to," is the answering argument.

As you go out to teach, you will find schools where opinion and experience are on one or the other side of this argument. The issues are not clear-cut; the alternatives do not seem completely satisfactory. Perhaps you can help develop a creative solution. Sooner or later, all of you will face the issue. What do you think about it now?

Perhaps we can help you by asking one question: Have you ever been placed in a "slow" group? If not, do you know what it *feels* like to be in such a group? You might seek out a school with homogeneous grouping and interview some adolescents at the different ability levels. Take time to gain their confidence. Ask them how it feels. Then judge the organizational solution.

Research does not yet give us enough guidance on this question of grouping. The most recent survey of school practices showed that more special administrative provisions are being made for slow learners than for rapid learners. Although fewer schools are using homogeneous grouping than twenty years ago, at least half the schools surveyed in this nation-wide study did report some such plan.⁴

In later sections of this chapter we will discuss the problems of teaching slow and fast learners in both homogeneous and heterogeneous groups. Regardless of the method you deem preferable, it is only realistic to be prepared to do your best in either situation.

⁴ *Teaching Rapid and Slow Learners in High Schools*, U. S. Office of Education, Bulletin 1954, No. 5 (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1954), p. 13.

Teaching the Slow Learner

Today, more young people stay in school for a longer period of time than ever before. As a result, there has been growing concern for those who are not intellectually able to meet the same standards in the same period of time, no matter how hard they try. As we have noted, the elementary schools have chosen to follow what is termed "social promotion." This means that all children move ahead with their age group, even if they are demonstrably below their peers in school achievement. It isn't wise, the argument goes, to keep a big, bulky adolescent with third-graders just because he has not learned to read beyond this level.

You can—and surely will—argue the merits and failings of this point of view. But whatever you think about it, you will face the consequences in your own classroom. You will have students who cannot read beyond the third- or fourth-grade level. You will have some who cannot spell words more difficult than *cat* or *dog* with any degree of confidence. Some will be unable to remember a simple set of directions, to file things alphabetically, to do simple arithmetic.

It must be remembered that some students may be slow learners because of factors other than limited intellectual capacity. For example, this happened in a Michigan classroom.

Janice was accepted by her teachers, her classmates, and her family as being not very bright. She seemed to have trouble with her school-work, could not read very well, and, in general, seemed destined for routine jobs. About the middle of her high school career one teacher, after observing her rather closely, suggested that her eyes be tested. It was found that she was very nearsighted. Glasses were given her, and Janice found that she could read the blackboard for the first time. She could read her books without tiring quickly. Her problems did not disappear overnight, but by graduation she was a better-than-average student.

Many schools provide physical examinations that usually detect such gross physical handicaps as that just described. But it is important to remember that some slow-learning students may have physical difficulties of a less obvious nature. When students appear to be working at a slower than normal rate, it may be advisable for the teacher to suggest more extensive physical examinations.

Sometimes emotional troubles impede learning. Conflict in the home or poor adjustment to age-mates makes the world so unpleasant or so disturbing that the student cannot, no matter how hard he tries, take in very much of the material of the classroom. Sometimes students have had some bitter experience with failure, and, rather than feel that terror again, refuse to take an active role in the classroom. Thus, they are actually *afraid* to learn, rather than incapable of it.

Although both physical and emotional factors may make a normally endowed child appear to be a slow learner, here we are especially concerned with those students who really do have limited learning capacities. How can these students be detected, and what can be done to improve their opportunities to learn?

Identifying the Slow Learner

How does a slow-learning child act? How does he look? You know the stereotype of the very dull. This is the student whose face looks empty—there is no spark or life in his expression. He rarely responds to the moods of the class. When other youngsters are laughing at a joke, the dull student has not understood what it was all about. He is the last one to open his book, has usually forgotten pencil and paper, usually does not know the assignment, and cannot follow the teacher's directions.

However, this dull look is not so typical as we think. The slow learner is often a very happy, gay, extroverted sort of person. His sense of the world is that it is a relatively simple, pleasant place, and he is likely to be less worried than other students since he understands fewer of the consequences of his own actions. What appears to be irresponsibility is actually a somewhat more restricted view of the world. Teachers often find that when classroom tasks are appropriate to their abilities, slow learners are the happiest, most pleasant, best-adjusted students in the class. Since most teachers tend to be concerned about the larger world, aware of the many problems that life presents, such attitudes may seem out of place and most unnatural. Some teachers may go so far as to try to make these happy youngsters worried and anxious, since they feel that it is not "normal" for students not to care about the future. These teachers would do

better to try to understand the differences between slow learners and themselves than to remake the students.

What other behaviors identify the slow-learning child? He is often very responsive to personal attention. If treated with kindness, he freely responds with greater effort in school tasks.

Mary Ann and her older sister, Alice, were in the same United States history class. The teacher discovered the reason for this when she checked the records. Although there was a three-year age difference between the two girls, Alice had been retained two years in elementary school. Now she was barely able to keep up with her younger sister. "It must be hard enough to be in the same grade with her younger sister," thought the teacher, "Without the added torture of being in the same class."

But this was a small rural high school and there just wasn't any other class for Alice. She was far from a good student. She rarely did her homework. She giggled and teased the boys near her. The teacher scolded, frowned, berated. Nothing worked. One day the teacher, glancing up, saw Alice scowling at her as usual. Instead of returning the frown, the teacher smiled—a warm, friendly smile. Alice seemed completely taken aback, but weakly smiled in return. She went back to work, too. From that day the teacher found it easy to smile at Alice. And Alice, though not becoming a model pupil overnight, was more amenable to requests and generally more cooperative.

The greatest difference between slow-learning students and other students is, of course, in the way they think. Most teachers have had little, if any, close contact with people of average or below-normal mental processes. By the very selection of the teaching profession, by his broad education, the teacher has put himself in a superior group of individuals. Probably it is only with people of similar advantages that he has associated closely for many years. It is therefore often extremely difficult for the teacher to grasp the way in which the average or below-average mind learns.

THE POOR SCHOLAR'S SOLILOQUY⁵

No, I'm not very good in school. This is my second year in the seventh grade, and I'm bigger and taller than the other kids. They like me all right, though, even if I don't say much in the classroom, because outside I can tell them how to do a lot of things. They tag me around and that sort of makes up for what goes on in school.

I don't know why the teachers don't like me. They never have very

⁵ Stephen M. Corey in *Childhood Education*, 20:219-220, January 1944.

much. Seems like they don't think you know anything unless they can name the book it comes out of. I've got a lot of books in my room at home—books like *Popular Science Mechanical Encyclopedia*, and the Sears' and Ward's catalogues—but I don't very often just sit down and read them through like they make us do in school. I use my books when I want to find something out, like whenever Mom buys anything second-hand I look it up in Sears' or Ward's first and tell her if she's getting stung or not. I can use the index in a hurry.

In school, though, we've got to learn whatever is in the book and I just can't memorize the stuff. Last year I stayed after school every night for two weeks trying to learn the names of the Presidents. Of course I knew some of them, like Washington and Jefferson and Lincoln, but there must have been thirty altogether, and I never did get them straight.

I'm not too sorry though, because the kids who learned the Presidents had to turn right around and learn all the Vice Presidents. I am taking the seventh grade over, but our teacher this year isn't so interested in the names of the Presidents. She has us trying to learn the names of all the great American inventors.

I guess I just can't remember names in history. Anyway, this year I've been trying to learn about trucks because my uncle owns three and he says I can drive one when I'm sixteen. I already know the horsepower and number of forward and backwards speeds of twenty-six American trucks, some of them Diesels, and I can spot each make a long way off. It's funny how that Diesel works. I started to tell my teacher about it last Wednesday in science class when the pump we were using to make a vacuum in a bell jar got hot, but she said she didn't see what a Diesel engine had to do with our experiment on air pressure so I just kept still. The kids seemed interested though. I took four of them around to my uncle's garage after school and we saw the mechanic, Gus, tear a big truck Diesel down. Boy, does he know his stuff!!

I'm not very good in geography either. They call it economic geography this year. We've been studying the imports and exports of Chile all week, but I couldn't tell you what they are. Maybe the reason is I had to miss school yesterday because my uncle took me and his big trailer truck downstate about 200 miles, and we brought almost 10 tons of stock to the Chicago market.

He had told me where we were going, and I had to figure out the highways to take and also the mileage. He didn't do anything but drive and turn where I told him to. Was that fun! I sat with a map in my lap and told him to turn south, or southeast, or some other direction. We made seven stops, and drove over 500 miles round trip. I'm figuring now what his oil cost, and also the wear and tear on the truck—he calls it depreciation—so we'll know how much we made.

I even write out all the bills and send letters to the farmers about what their pigs and beef cattle brought at the stockyards. I only made

three mistakes in 17 letters last time, my aunt said—all commas. She's been through high school and reads them over. I wish I could write school themes that way. The last one I had to write was on "What a Daffodil Thinks of Spring," and I just couldn't get going.

I don't do very well in school in arithmetic either. Seems I just can't keep my mind on the problems. We had one the other day like this:

If a 57-foot telephone pole falls across a cement highway so that 17-3/6 feet extend from one side and 14-9/17 feet from the other, how wide is the highway?

That seemed to me like an awfully silly way to get the width of a highway. I didn't even try to answer it because it didn't say whether the pole had fallen straight across or not.

Even in shop I don't get very good grades. All of us kids made a broom holder and a book end this term and mine were sloppy. I just couldn't get interested. Mom doesn't use a broom any more with her new vacuum cleaner, and all our books are in a bookcase with glass doors in the parlor. Anyway, I wanted to make an end gate for my uncle's trailer, but the shop teacher said that meant using metal and wood both, and I'd have to learn how to work with wood first. I didn't see why, but I kept still and made a tie rack at school and the tail gate after school at my uncle's garage. He said I saved him ten dollars.

Civics is hard for me, too. I've been staying after school trying to learn the Articles of Confederation for almost a week, because the teacher said we couldn't be good citizens unless we did. I really tried, because I want to be a good citizen. I did hate to stay after school, though, because a bunch of us boys from the south end of town have been cleaning up the old lot across from Taylor's Machine Shop to make a playground out of it for the little kids from the Methodist home. I made the jungle gym from old pipe, and the guys made me Grand Mogul to keep the playground going. We raised enough money collecting scrap this month to build a wire fence clear around the lot.

Dad says I can quit school when I am fifteen, and I am sort of anxious to because there are a lot of things I want to learn . . . and, as my uncle says, I'm not getting any younger.

The slow learner actually puts facts together differently, generalizes differently, thinks differently. He can retain few details, few facts. He remembers attitudes, feelings, emotions, more accurately than data. He can report his reactions but has little insight into why he responded as he did. Abstractions are difficult for him; he works from one concrete situation to another concrete situation, but cannot very often make the generalized connection between them. For

example, if asked to find out why the United Nations is more likely to succeed than the League of Nations, he will probably fail miserably.

Precautions in Handling Slow Learners

Intelligence has many facets. A student who is very creative in writing may be very slow in arithmetical reasoning. Another student, who responds very well to the orderly sequence of material in a science class, may become confused when asked to see the order in social data. The teacher must exercise great care in assuming that the slow-learning student in his class is a slow student in all classes. Although this assumption is true of many of the slow students, it must not be applied indiscriminately to all. In any classroom there should be opportunities for all *types* of abilities to be rewarded, as well as for all *levels* of abilities to succeed.

Frequently the teacher who identifies a slow-learning student will suggest that he be given a chance to do shopwork, or be placed in clerical and business training classes, or be put in music and art courses. The teachers of these fields are likely to begin to feel that their classes are a dumping ground for the misfits of the school. This method of dealing with the slow student is a mistake for two reasons.

First, this policy assumes that the manual arts or even the fine arts require less native ability than other academic courses. Actually, it takes a high degree of a rather special kind of intelligence to make a good secretary, a good mechanic, a good artist or musician. The lack of verbal skill does not necessarily mean that the slow student will be more interested in less verbal areas. It is untenable to assume that because a student does poorly in reading, he will be interested and do well in mechanical tasks.

Second, if the slow learners are moved completely into the so-called vocational courses, they are prevented from having as broad a cultural background as those with greater verbal ability. The slower student is more likely to run into conflict with society than other students simply because it is so difficult for him to understand its complexities. It is therefore more important, rather than less, that he be given a full share of education in the basic courses that lead to social understanding. The real job of the teachers of literature,

social science, history, science, and mathematics is so to arrange their learning experiences that the slow as well as the average or bright student can become a well-educated citizen, a competent worker, and a good parent.

The Background of the Slow Learner

When dealing with the slow-learning student in the high school, the teacher should bear in mind constantly the kind of school history that the student has probably had. It is tragic but true that for many of the slower students, school has become a place of terror, or boredom, or cruelty, or painful embarrassment, or all of these. These students have known failure before; usually they started falling behind early in their elementary school career. Sometimes their first failures came as the result of being out of school because of prolonged illness, after which they were never able to catch up. Perhaps a particular subject was failed, and the failure has permeated their whole attitude toward education. There may have been a traumatic experience with a given teacher, which made the student feel that learning was too painful for him. Sometimes the parental attitude toward the slow learner has had a bearing on his ability to progress in school. It has been observed that where parents press the child beyond his ability to produce, the slow student often retreats and will not even work up to whatever capacity he does possess.

The principal of a large high school reported one of his most painful cases. They had known John was far from bright. His elementary school record had shown how he had struggled with the bare essentials. Teacher-parent conferences had evidently been very difficult because the parents had refused to accept the teacher's judgment of John's intelligence. The several tests he had taken showed his I Q to be between 85 and 90. He was finding it increasingly difficult to keep up with the pace set by the upper-middle-class suburban community in which he lived. In desperation, the counselor had come to the principal, saying that John just had to be rescued from the college-preparatory course. The principal decided that he would talk with the parents. He could never forget the stricken look in the father's eyes as he said, "But John can't be that dumb; he's our only child."

How can the teacher gain insight into the background of the slow student? Several sources are available. Consultation with his

previous teachers often turns up valuable information, and school records may show where the inability to progress at the expected rate first appeared. Interviews with the student, of course, should prove an important source of information. (The procedure of student interviews is described in Chapter 19.)

When the slow learner is being interviewed, several admonitions should be kept in mind. First, the interview should be as routine as possible. The slow learner needs reassurance. He will be suspicious if he is treated differently until he learns that this treatment will aid him. It is best to interview all the students in the classroom, even though the real purpose is to interview only a few; then no student will feel singled out for special and perhaps, at first, unwanted attention.

Second, in the interview itself, the teacher should indicate genuine interest in the student's problems. At no time should the teacher show disapproval, disappointment, or censure. Understanding and acceptance of the student's report of his reasons for failure is a prerequisite to gaining insight into the true cause. Probably the student will have his own protective explanations for his failure, built on a variety of obviously spurious circumstances. Thus, he protects himself from facing any damaging truth about himself. The teacher should not take this self-protection away from the student by questioning whether he has the right view of his own problem. Rather, he should accept the student's explanation and from there work on the recognition of a learning problem that the teacher and the student together can solve.

Before turning to the fast learners, let us review the problems of the teacher who must deal with a few slow learners in a class of average and above-average ability (heterogeneous grouping) and consider the problems of the teacher who must deal with a class made up principally of slow learners (homogeneous grouping).

The Slow Learner in the Heterogeneous Class

The preceding portions of this chapter have indicated in general what the teacher can do when a few slow learners turn up in the average classroom. To these general principles can be added some specific practices that have proved helpful:

Try to have the slow learner become as much a part of class activities as possible. That is, whenever the slow learner can make a contribution to any aspect of the class work, he should be given the opportunity to do so. He can run many errands, perform many clerical and other routine tasks around the room, be scorekeeper for review games, act as monitor, timekeeper, shelf-straightener.

Make available special materials for the slow learner. Simplified texts, special readings, shorter problems, should be prepared ahead of time by the teacher for the slower student. It is not enough to keep him out of mischief; he also should be helped to learn.

This point needs special emphasis. Since so much of our classroom work requires some reading facility, the slow learner, or the child who has not learned to read very well and is therefore often considered a slow learner, needs particular help and attention. Special materials, geared to lower reading levels, are beginning to appear for high school students. You will want to check your professional reference books and journals for reviews of such material. The librarian or the curriculum coordinator of your school may be able to help you find material. Its addition to your classroom resources is definitely worth the effort it may cost to locate.

Provide a variety of learning activities. This is essential in any classroom, but it is particularly important in one where the range of talents and skills is great. All students cannot learn through one channel. An activity that gives one student a chance to learn may be of no help to another. The slow learner especially needs to work at a somewhat more concrete level than the rest of the class. Community resources, role-playing, audio-visual materials help him gain a firmer grasp on the abstract.

Develop group work in the classroom. You will want to distribute the slow students among others who can learn at the expected rate. In the groups those who are slow can learn through listening to their classmates and observing their handling of the material. Other students are good and often patient teachers when given a chance to help. Even though the slower ones may appear to be silent onlookers in a group, they often show that they, too, have grasped the material at hand.

Provide an atmosphere of sympathetic understanding. Too often the busy teacher becomes impatient and overcritical of the slow learner, who never seems to get the point, who always has to ask

the question that was just answered. The teacher must constantly remember the handicap that restricts such students and treat them with *consistent* patience and good humor.

Have some of the very bright students work as coaches or tutors with the slower students. Used judiciously, this procedure makes the most of the talents of both very fast and very slow students and takes some of the burden of individual instruction off the teacher's shoulders. At the same time it provides a chance for the slow learner to keep up with the class.

Discuss the student's progress with him as often as possible, pointing out his strengths and being realistic about his weaknesses. Where grading is on an absolute level of achievement, it is important to cushion for the slow student the inevitable low grade. This can best be accomplished by individual conferences.

Plan to give, from time to time, a test or examination that is designed to give the slow learner a chance to get a good grade. By putting in very easy questions, very obvious problems, the slow learner may have a few successful experiences and develop a somewhat better personal feeling toward trying to learn. The test has shown him that he, too, is capable of learning something.

I hadn't really understood what it meant to be a person like Susan. I knew that she was not very bright, but she was quiet and docile and really no bother. One day I gave a test that I thought would be easy. I had really been concerned about class morale and had remembered that sometimes a class gets a lift when everyone does get a good mark on a test after a series of pretty tough quizzes. But I was not prepared for Susan's reaction when I returned the papers. She looked at her paper, puzzled. Then she flushed and put it away. It had, I remembered, a "B" on it. After class she came up to my desk, standing there rather awkwardly and shyly. "Mrs. Key," she said, "I think you made a mistake. I got a 'B' on my paper." "Why no, Susan," I said, "That was right. That was a good paper." Her face changed utterly. She just glowed. "Why, that's the first 'B' I ever got!" she cried with deep joy, and ran out of the room. I don't know when I have seen such happiness on a child's face and felt such a pang in my own heart.

The Slow Learner in the Homogeneous Class

Some teachers find a whole class of slow learners a challenge; others dread it. Admittedly, the problems are many. Since the

The classroom, like every other part of America, has been affected by the vast changes in technology, communication, lighting, and architectural design that are a part of our second industrial revolution.

But no change that we can imagine can provide a substitute for the relationship of the teacher to the individual student. One concept of genuine education will always be symbolized by Mark Hopkins on one end of a log conversing with his student at the other end.*

We can, however, support and aid the precious quality of the teacher-learner relationship with good tools of instruction. Fortunately, these are becoming more and more readily available. Our objective should be not only to obtain them but also to learn to use them well.

Here is a corner of a very modern classroom, with a junior high school boy using a new plastic translucent globe. It would be useful to try to identify other tools of learning that the classroom contains. How many are new, and what do we mean by "new"? [Photo courtesy Carl Byoir & Associates, Inc.]

* For Education is, Making Man,
So it is now, so was it when
Mark Hopkins sat on one end of a log
And James Clifford sat on the other.





Equipment is, of course, important and necessary. Fortunate are the teachers (and, presumably, the students) whose schools have money to spend. But the teacher should not give up in despair if his school fails to provide him with all the materials he would like to have. It is often possible to use inexpensive everyday articles in a project or an experiment and still interest and challenge students. Obviously there are occasions when the necessary equipment cannot be improvised. No one expects the teacher to manufacture his own violins or to improvise sewing machines. But ingenuity and creativity are always important, and they become essential if all the classroom offers is four bare walls, thirty desks and chairs, and thirty not-so-eager upturned faces.

The boys in both these pictures are privileged: one because he goes to a good school; the others because they have a good teacher. [Photos courtesy The School Executive (top) and U. S. Office of Education (bottom)]

students usually have little interest in classroom work, particularly in the academic subjects, the class is often characterized by a general apathy. Its slow progress makes severe demands on the teacher's patience.

Sometimes classes for slow learners include brighter students who have behavior difficulties or need remedial work. Unless these students receive extensive counseling, they will effectively disrupt all learning.

For a class composed predominately of very slow students, these suggestions may prove useful.

The selection of text material is of prime importance. You may be able to locate text material that is written for adolescents but is considerably simplified. You may experiment in writing some of your own material. Sometimes you can obtain elementary texts not used in the elementary schools of your area and secure permission to cut them up and bind the pages in folders. If you are restricted to a standard text that is too difficult for the students, you may try current materials. Although these are written for an adult audience, the popular style, the pictures, the higher interest level may help overcome reading reluctance as well as reading limitations.

A careful scrutiny of course content should be undertaken early in the term. What should these students learn during a semester? You must normally select materials and projects carefully in planning for teaching; with a class of slow learners you must prune drastically. Whatever reading assignments are planned should be short and spaced far enough apart so that students do not become hopelessly discouraged. However, you will want to avoid belaboring two or three paragraphs of text each period. If it is obvious that the point has been missed, you must depend on your own ability to simplify and expound or go on to the next problem or idea.

Written assignments should be kept brief. Students with a reading handicap usually have difficulty in written work. And even if they can read, their writing is probably considerably less than fluent. Spelling will be a problem unless you concentrate on a list of words used frequently.

As you select learning activities and content, you must devise some way for the students to gain a sense of achievement. Perhaps they can build a model stage or make a relief map or mount some common moths. School success is a rare experience in the lives of

slow learners. The more they can experience success that is genuine, worth while, and truly their own, the more willing they will be to expend effort on school work.

Since the slow learner's capacity for intellectualization is limited, you will have to stretch your imagination to find applications of abstract material. If concrete applications seem impossible, you will want to reconsider whether to teach that particular unit. These young people have as varied an adolescent life as brighter students; this can be exploited to the full in relating class work to situations they know and live in. "Did you ever know a person like this?" or "Did anyone you know ever live in a place that sounded like this one?" or "What would your family do to solve a problem of this kind?" are some ways of drawing out the back-home applications of class material.

The slow learner can and should work as hard as any other student. Given a chance, he too wants to make something of his life and will respond with a full measure of devotion and energy if he knows you are on his side. You can demonstrate your support by not making snide comments about the intellectual limitations of the group. This is destructive and unprofessional. You also show that you are on "their" side by helping these students learn in short doses. Don't expect them to remember yesterday's lesson. Each day may very well have to be self-contained. To recall what happened the day before, when three or four other classes have already intervened, is asking a lot of a limited intelligence. Do not berate them for being what they are, but, through your planning, help them make a little progress.

Patience is perhaps the teacher's chief ally. Often the simplest instructions, the most elementary ideas, must be repeated many times. It may take every bit of self-control for the brighter teacher to keep from lambasting the dull class if he has explained something for the tenth time without their gaining the essential point. You can learn to be patient in this situation, but it is not easy. For the mental health of both student and teacher, you may find it more useful to think of the variety of ways a single idea or concept can be presented, and the many ways relearning can be guided. Using some of the "fun" ways of organizing drill and review (see Chapter 11) will help immeasurably.

As you read the paragraphs above, you may have said to your-

self, "Never for me." It does not sound very challenging. It isn't—in the sense of being intellectually stimulating. It is this fact that is one of the strongest arguments against homogeneous grouping. Yet, with a real appreciation of these young people as just as human and just as valuable as other students, you can perhaps make more of a difference in a total life pattern than with almost any other group. Here, truly, is a place for the person with a sense of mission.

Teaching the Fast Learner

Consider the following students:

Johnny has all the answers. Before Miss Brown has finished explaining the contribution of Einstein to the development of the atomic bomb, his hand is waving wildly in the air—he is ready to launch into a vivid, accurate, rapid half-hour lecture of his own on $E = mc^2$.

Annabelle never has to study. Her papers come in with the regularity of a ticking clock: neat, polished, perfect. She has an aloof and bored expression during the hour's discussion of King Lear. Yet, when asked to write a theme on the major issues raised, she does so effortlessly and with remarkable insight.

Gordon is a pest. He gets every assignment done in one tenth of the time it takes the rest of the class. His work can be quite good, but it is usually sloppy, careless, tossed off in a hurry. Then he spends the rest of the time making life miserable for Mr. Jones, Mrs. Gray, Mr. Snyder—in fact, for every teacher he has. He can think of more ways to annoy teachers than a whole school of adolescents.

Bill had a terrible report card. The highest mark on it was a "C," and this was in physical education. His citizenship marks were equally bad. No one could get him to work in school. Laziness, perversity, cussedness? No one knew.

What do the students above have in common? It is this: They are all very bright. They have intelligence quotients ranging from 140 on up. Their problems, at times, seem very similar to those of the slow learner, and sometimes very different. While work for the slow learner needs to be simplified and slowed down, work for the fast student needs to be accelerated, made more complex.

There are some popular notions about gifted children that should be dispelled. According to observers, the very bright student is usually as healthy as any other child, if not more so; is likely to be as emotionally stable as other students, if not more so—in fact, he presents a picture of superiority in many areas, not merely in intelligence.⁶ It is popularly expected that the very bright will somehow be peculiar, yet research studies contradict this notion. It is true that the very bright child often associates with older persons. His interests have grown faster than those of his contemporaries, and his mind can grasp more mature matters. At the same time, his social maturity may not have kept pace.⁷ In the schools, examples of this will often be seen. In addition, the brightest in a class will very often be the youngest, and this difference in age may make him feel awkward, out of place, odd.

Some fast learners have particular difficulties because of cultural expectations and values. It is not unusual, for example, to find very bright girls refusing to demonstrate their intelligence. They may do only the minimum of schoolwork; they prefer to get by on average performance, and even deliberately do poorly in subjects they know well. Why is this? The expectation is still common in our society that women should know less than men; that boys prefer the “dumb blonde.” In one college, where the grade averages of all students are published annually, the girls openly admit that it would be very dangerous for them as “date material” to get averages that were too high. The boys won’t ask a “brain” out for a coke or a dance. Against such social pressures, the teacher may easily feel helpless. Is he doing the girl a disservice by demanding that she use her superior brain? By doing so, she may alienate herself from her social group; she may be educated out of adjustment to her own concept of her proper role. On the other hand, the teacher may feel that the set of values that says women must hide intelligence is a poor one, since our society needs all the educated talent it can get.

The problem of the girl who will not work to capacity is very similar to that of the boy who uses his intelligence only selectively. He may be the star on the football field because of his photographic

⁶ Marian Scheifele, *The Gifted Child in the Regular Classroom* (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1953).

⁷ Educational Policies Commission, *Education of the Gifted* (Washington, D. C.: National Education Association, 1950), p. 50.

memory for plays and his keen, quick mind in figuring strategy. But when it comes to analyzing geometric proofs, he just won't be bothered. Or he may refuse to discuss or consider poetry or music or art because he thinks of it as "sissy stuff." The problems posed by such youngsters are not easily solved. All teachers are reluctant to see a bright student sit through classes without applying his intelligence to the material at hand. But they need to recognize that in order to keep his self-respect, a boy must try to grow up into his vision of what a real man is—a vision that reflects some of the problems and distortions of the adult world.

In recent years there has been a tremendous growth of interest in the educational provisions being made for gifted children. We are reminded that these children will become the leaders and creative thinkers of the future. It has been pointed out that while special school adjustments are made for handicapped and retarded youngsters, the very bright child is often left to shift for himself. A number of recent programs, several of them financed by the Ford Foundation, have helped focus educational attention on this problem. The questions that are continually being asked are: How do we identify the gifted child? What school provisions can we make for him?

In some schools the highly gifted students are placed in special "honors" programs or seminars, where they proceed at their own speed, do independent research, are allowed to tackle problems of a very advanced nature. In other schools they are kept in the regular classroom but given particular attention by teachers who are provided with extra resource material. It is difficult to find an educational journal these days without some reference to a program for gifted students. Special scholarship and talent-search programs are carried out on a nation-wide scale.

All of this attention to the problem of the gifted is justified by their potential contribution to society. But these students, too, are adolescents who live and play with others. In our concentration on their contribution to society, we should not overlook the "society" that is to be served. It would do us no good to give special education to all the gifted we could find if, at the same time, we alienated the rest of the people so that they refused to accept the guidance and leadership of the intellectual. Surely this estrangement of the very able from their peers need not occur.

Above all, let us remember the *dual* responsibilities of education. Education is *both* for a society *and* for an individual. The pressures of society mount as its structures grow in complexity. This is what we really mean when we worry aloud about "this age of conformity." The management of a society is of course easier when people conform. Management is easier, but the quality of living is deadlier for the individual. The nice problem in modern culture is to retain enough "sameness" in behavior to permit good order, while cherishing enough "differentness" in behavior to foster creative individuality. Obviously, social demands weigh heavily on the schools—without the continuing sanction of society, schools cannot exist. *It will take both high courage and unyielding devotion on your part as a teacher to see that individuality is not sacrificed.* The dead weight of numbers will push you every day toward a more comfortable passage along society's "middle road." Will you take it?

The Fast Learner in the Homogeneous Class

The advantages and disadvantages of ability grouping for fast learners have been debated at length. To minimize the disadvantage which may attend this kind of grouping, the teacher should plan programs based on these major principles:

Learn to know individual differences among the very bright. Although the ability of the group may be generally superior, there will continue to be great differences in interests and in developmental tasks.

Establish a high standard of performance, which challenges the abilities of the group. There should be a constant attempt to help students establish a standard of workmanship that makes them uncomfortable with inferior work. This is best accomplished by group discussion, by inquiry on the part of the teacher as to what more could be done, by playing down grades and emphasizing performance, by having available a rich range of resources and activities.

Devote special attention to the development of adequate social skills. The teacher may use material that emphasizes social understanding, and classroom techniques that promote cooperation and interchange.

Encourage individual initiative and student leadership. The

bright student will often acquire leadership roles just because he is bright, not because he is a good leader. Sensitivity to the needs and feelings of followers is an important aspect of the education of the very bright. This sensitivity comes as a result of opportunities to assume leadership responsibility.

Do not let the class get a false idea of superiority. The practice of segregation may produce in bright students a spurious sense of their own superiority. Showing them how much more they have to learn, and demonstrating the lessons to be learned from others, regardless of IQ, will help reduce this possibility.

Set a high level of expectation regarding self-discipline, self-control, and self-direction. Bright students can go a long way in educating themselves and in running their own affairs if an opportunity is provided for making mistakes under guidance. The bright student needs the mature adult as much as the slow student, but the former can learn more quickly from his experiences.

The Fast Learner in the Heterogeneous Class

In classes where bright students are found with all other varieties of intelligence and personality, the teacher should be on the alert to give them special aid and help. Such students profit from an enriched program. Although they follow the curricular pattern of their classmates, they should be expected to explore many side avenues of interest as well. Some classroom techniques for meeting the needs of fast learners in mixed classes are summarized below:

Materials on an adult level covering the content of the course should be available in the classroom. Wherever possible, these should be particularly recommended to the bright student as a substitute for textbook material.

Do not allow bright students to monopolize the teacher's time. Sometimes the response of bright students is so rewarding that the teacher gears a whole class to these few. This does the rest of the class a disservice and is likely to interfere with the optimum adjustment of the bright students.

Allow bright students to develop all their talents. Too often the bookish interest of the bright student is exploited, as though this were the only demonstration of intelligence that really counted. The

superior student is often superior in other ways. This fact should be recognized by the teacher in making assignments.

Identifying very bright students is a major responsibility of the teacher. If school records are used carefully, such students can be spotted early. Sometimes the maladjusted student who is very bright is not recognized because of his destructive classroom behavior. However, if his superior intelligence is given recognition, the behavior problem can be met. The teacher will do most to aid the superior student by enriching his intellectual fare while facilitating his acceptance as a desirable member of the class.

SUMMARY

Slow and fast learners present special problems for the teacher. An early recognition of these significant differences will make classroom instruction more rewarding for all concerned. In planning his work, gathering materials, selecting content, the teacher should always keep in mind the differing needs of the very fast and the very slow and make adequate provision for them. Each subject field presents different problems to be solved for both slow and fast students, and provides different opportunities for significant learning experiences. The bibliography at the end of this chapter includes some references to adaptations in different fields that have been successfully used for both slow and fast learners. There are many more such accounts to be found in the professional literature. They will be an invaluable source of help for the teacher in providing maximum learning for these students.

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The Communication Skills

THE PROBLEMS OF COMMUNICATION are central to instruction in the high school. The student who is deficient in the basic skills of communication may be unable to learn or, what is just as grave a problem, to demonstrate his learning. In the typical high school, the great majority of all study activities require silent reading as a means of gaining knowledge. What then, we must ask, of the student who has not learned to read very well? What can he expect to achieve in high school? And if a student has not learned how to express himself fluently in writing, can he succeed in high school? What about the student who has never learned to listen? The student who cannot speak effectively?

Reading in the High School

Reading continues to develop efficiently only when it is directly taught. If reading development after the sixth grade is left to chance,

growth at best will be uneven and, at worst, will level off or even retrogress. The responsibility of high school teachers for reading instruction is clear and inescapable.

The responsibility would obtain even if all students who entered seventh grade were at seventh-grade reading level and even if all students who entered ninth or tenth grade were at those reading levels. But, as we all know, this has never been true and never will be. One large school system reported the range in reading achievement for its entering ninth-grade students as follows:

7%	at grade 4 or below
23%	at grades 5 and 6
16%	at grade 7
14%	at grade 8
16%	at grade 9
11%	at grade 10
7%	at grade 11
6%	at grade 12 or above ¹

Grade level of students

That this is no new trend can be ascertained quickly by examining records of high school students in prior decades. Twenty-five years ago, in another large school system, a survey of all tenth-grade students showed the following reading range:

3%	at grade 4 or below
15%	at grades 5 and 6
10%	at grade 7
12%	at grade 8
20%	at grade 9
23%	at grade 10

Grade level of students

As the high school comes to include more and more of the total adolescent population, reading achievement will, if anything, show an even wider range. To ignore this continuing and inevitable fact

¹ National Society for the Study of Education, *Reading in the High School and College*, Forty-eighth Yearbook, Part II (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1948), p. 16.

² C. C. Grover, "A Survey of the Reading Achievement of Pupils in Low-Tenth Grade," *School Review*, 40:587-594, October 1932.

about the reading development of young people seems to invite criticism.

But there is one more persuasive reason for continuing reading instruction. The reading materials of the high school curriculum employ vocabulary never before encountered and ideas never before approached in quality and complexity. Elementary school instruction cannot and does not prepare a student to read effectively in mature forms of literature, in the advanced social studies, in algebra, in biology, in business education, in art—to name just a few representative studies. Reading is no more, and no less, than focused thinking. To read well in an area of learning is to think well in that area. You cannot learn to think well and to read well until you encounter the concepts, skills, and appreciations of a field of study. Then, and then only, can instruction in reading and thinking be provided.

So long as high school teachers depend heavily on reading materials for teaching and learning, reading instruction is essential. This means, of course, reading instruction for every student: for the advanced, for the average, for the retarded. And it means reading instruction in every course. There is no alternative—except frustration.

Reading in the Separate Subjects

Reading is a twofold process. It is, *first*, the apprehending of individual words, phrases, and other symbols, and, *second*, the relating of these words, phrases, and symbols to make a larger meaning. Apprehending words, phrases, and symbols—vocabulary—is the absolutely minimum essential of reading. The fewer words the reader knows in a given field of knowledge, the slower he will read; or, if he reads quickly, ignoring the unknowns, the more superficial and chaotic will be his understanding. The second half of the reading process recognizes that a word or a phrase, generally speaking, is related to other words and phrases to effect communication. Even very simple words can set forth ideas of great complexity by their relationships to one another. A favorite example is:

“To be or not to be, that is the question.”

Every word is simple; but the idea, established by the relationships among these simple words, is anything but simple.

You will notice that we have said nothing about moving the eyes over the page at a faster clip. Reading is not just a traveling of the eyes. Reading is primarily a traveling of the mind. If the reader can be persuaded, stimulated, taught to move his mind faster, his eyes will keep pace.

Of course, the travels of the mind—and how rapid those journeys can be—depend on *what* you are reading and *why* you read it in the first place. And here we need to make a distinction between literary material and expository material. The distinction is gross, but it will serve our purposes.

We should not talk about rate of comprehension *in general*. We should talk about rate of comprehension in literature, in social studies, in science, in mathematics, in whatever field of knowledge our interest lies. If we think about it a moment, we see that a swift comprehension of short stories is not necessarily a swift comprehension of scientific exposition. Each discipline or area of study has its own vocabulary and its own way of relating this vocabulary to build its own ideas. If the reader should be so unsophisticated as to take his speed with the *vocabulary* of short stories and the *ideas* of short stories to try to comprehend scientific exposition, he would find himself badly prepared indeed. We do not make the analogy with short stories accidentally; as you know, reading instruction is heavily weighted with short story material.

Nor should we talk about rate of comprehension even within a field of knowledge without carefully specifying the breadth and depth of that comprehension. It is all too easy to talk about a large number of words read per minute, in history let us say, with some high degree of comprehension. But before being exhilarated by this accomplishment, we must ask some fundamental questions: How broad were the items comprehended? Were they trends, generalizations, analyses—and hence broad in scope; or were they names, events, places—and hence narrow in scope? And how deeply did we probe? Did we ask for recall, for memory, or did we ask for evaluation and application to new circumstances? We can *guarantee* fantastic rates of comprehension in any field of knowledge if you let us limit the breadth and restrict the depth of what we are asking the reader to comprehend. You can read Gladstone at 1,000 words a

minute at least if you read only to note how often he discusses anti-disestablishmentarianism.

Now with all these qualifications, let us turn to improving rate of comprehension—first in literary materials, and then in expository materials. With both kinds of material we shall note problems of vocabulary and problems of ideas.

LITERARY MATERIALS: VOCABULARY

Most vocabulary study in literature should emphasize the shades of meaning cast by words. You can do this by taking a passage in which word choice is particularly apt and substituting less adequate choices. You can also begin to sensitize students to the way style is shaped in part by vocabulary—for example, by finding the words rich in visual, auditory, olfactory, tactile, and kinesthetic imagery.

In poetry and drama, particularly, you can emphasize the rhythmic patterns established by words—the infinitely varied beat of language in joy and in grief, in pain, anger, and in high exultation.

The important emphasis in the vocabulary of literature is not on literal meaning but on tone and pitch, on feeling and connotation.

LITERARY MATERIALS: IDEAS

The problem of ideas in improving rate of comprehension in literature is many-faceted because literature has many forms: fiction, drama, poetry, to name just three.

Fiction. In novel-length fiction, the problem is to make characters, plot, and setting come quickly to life. In Walter Scott's day, one could afford to be leisurely about reading. Scott took his time adding dimension to his people, getting the plot sketched in the foreground, painting a rich tapestry for background. This was fine in Scott's day, because a story was to be treasured over a long time, read lingeringly over the long winter. Not many books were to be had.

But today the mass media give us a smoking gun and three corpses in the first four minutes. This is rough competition for the standard works of literature. Many young people need a lift to get going. This may mean reading aloud the early passages by a talented teacher, obviously enjoying what he reads. It may mean a pick-me-up

from time to time when interest falters later in the study. One way of reviving interest is through creative dramatics—that is, unrehearsed, free dramatization without script or memorized lines. It may mean help at the end from a teacher who goes back to re-create by his comments the people, the story, the places.

You see, if young people do not catch the wonderful possibilities of making their own imagery as they read, they will never read much. They need to see a good teacher—as an exemplar of the good reader—share with them the creative satisfactions of watching people, places, actions in the private theater of the mind.

Are teachers doing the wrong things with the books they have at hand? Although there are many ways in which interest in reading can be fostered, there are also many ways in which it can be killed. One of the most effective ways to kill interest in reading is to linger too long over any one book. The reading that takes place in some English classes seems to be based on the assumption that the teacher and the students are marooned on a desert island, with only one volume to last until rescue arrives. But a good book is written as though it came as a unified experience from the pen of the writer. It should be read, particularly if it is fiction, in the same spirit. It would be hard to have the feel of a single experience with anything that lasted for more than four or five days. A work of literature, to be grasped and enjoyed by adolescents, probably should be read within a week. If it takes longer, the value may well be lost.³

Drama. The problem in drama is just the reverse of that in novel-length fiction. Drama begins at once. The student who fails to identify the characters early may be confused and quickly lose interest. If he cannot build a setting out of the stage directions and dialogue, he may have a homeless people—certainly not conducive to devoted reading. If he cannot hear the lines as they would be voiced from the stage, he may have a lifeless story. So the task in reading is to take time to sketch character, to visualize setting, to read aloud the dialogue. Plays are meant to be played. Certainly this is the best advice for improving the rate of comprehension in drama.

Poetry. Poetry is even more terse than drama. But its reading difficulties do not derive exclusively from its compressed communication. In part the difficulties for adolescents, and particularly male

³ Jean D. Grambs, *The Development of Lifetime Reading Habits* (New York: American Book Publishers Council, 1954), p. 15.

adolescents, come from unfortunate themes—from tender rather than robust feelings, actions, ideas—from lack of narrative interest—from being too exclusively associated with the feminine world.

In part the difficulties come from vocabulary—unusual words chosen for sound, for image, for feeling. In part the difficulties come from word order. Poets deliberately dislocate the normal sequence of words. And yet the English language, as a relatively uninflected system—without case endings to indicate what part a word plays in a sentence—depends heavily on normality in word order. So when poets invert sentences, delay predicates, place modifiers in peculiar positions, comprehension difficulties are compounded.

One last difficulty in comprehending poetry arises from spatial arrangement. The separate lines in poetry are arranged as though they were separate sentences. The end-of-the-sentence appearance of the end of the line, the beginning-of-the-sentence appearance of the beginning of the line, leads students to read each line as a separate sentence and often, of course, to obscure meaning as a result. The rhythm and rhyme patterns frequently reinforce this facade which a poem presents, lending a finality to each line which must be resisted if meaning is to be joined.

With all forms of literary material, then, if you wish to improve rate of comprehension, you must know vocabulary and you must know the way ideas and emotions are handled within the literary form. Even more specifically, at later levels, you must know the vocabulary and the quality of ideas and emotions of given authors within a literary form. [There is, then, such a thing as too fast a rate of comprehension for Milton and such a thing as too slow a rate of comprehension for Longfellow.]

EXPOSITORY MATERIALS

What about expository materials? Here, rate of comprehension is specific to the field of knowledge—specific to social studies, specific to science, specific to mathematics. However, since comprehension in all these fields involves primarily logical communication, with the aesthetic element subordinated, some similarity in logical patterns for building ideas can be observed among the several fields of knowledge.

SOCIAL STUDIES: VOCABULARY

A couplet from Pope states succinctly the problem of vocabulary in the social studies:

Words are like leaves, and where they most abound
Much fruit of sense beneath is rarely found.

Social studies materials may contain such words as *hemisphere*, *armada*, *plebeian*, *mosaic*. The student must learn a technical vocabulary more or less peculiar to social studies. In addition, he must learn the proper names of various peoples, civilizations, places. He must learn to recognize these names and understand their significance. And, finally, he must learn many common words which in social studies have a special meaning: *cabinet*, *duty*, *ticket*.

It is all too easy for any and all of these words to become "blah" words—blurs on the pages—without meaning. If they are to acquire meaning for students, each of the key social studies words requires a rich background of concrete associations built from direct and indirect experience. Still pictures, film strips, motion pictures, and similar materials will help create this background.

SOCIAL STUDIES: IDEAS

Note immediately the difference between story material and concept-developing material. Story material may violate time sequence; using flashbacks and other techniques. Concept-developing material has a much greater devotion to orderly time sequence. Story material builds ideas by indirection; it may never clearly state the idea toward which it is tending. Reading between the lines is almost always necessary. Concept-building material constructs ideas more directly: by stating a problem, furnishing data, drawing conclusions; or sometimes by stating a principle and then illustrating its application by concrete instances. Story material may not heed logical order nor supply all the steps necessary for the logical development of an idea. Concept-building material pays close attention to the demands of logic in both order and completeness. Finally, and most important of all, most story material is written primarily for emotional impact; concept-building material is written primarily for intellectual effect.

Material should be selected specifically for instructing young people in these differences from story material. Reading for time

sequence in social studies material should emphasize *the time signals: the dates; the extent indicators: during, throughout, for; the place indicators: beginning, middle, end, before, after, when, then*. Remember, time needs anchorage to be meaningful. Select a few mooring places and chain important events to them.

Reading to solve social studies problems should also be taught in materials selected for that purpose. Students need practice in defining what they are looking for. Then they need help in finding the sources of data, gradually increasing their competence in library skills. Finally, they need practice in seeing what conclusions are justified by the evidence. In other words, they need specific practice with reference techniques.

Reading to find illustrations of a social studies principle or concept also needs guidance. Social studies materials often contain stories, anecdotes, reports of events that are intended to support the generalization, principle, concept. The process is from concept to illustration to concept. But the inductive leap back to the concept must be assured. Otherwise, the initial concept is lost in the illustrations.

Students need help in following the logic used to advance social propositions. This is our long-continued plea for building critical thinking:

What are the assumptions behind the social proposition?

How many of the assumptions can be supported by evidence?

How many have to be accepted without evidence?

What logically follows from these assumptions?

Do these deductions follow in the order in which the writer states them? Has he included all the pertinent deductions? etc.

In an age of mass media, the ability to detect when social propositions are advanced by sound logic and evidence and when they are not is obviously crucial.

In all of this reading—for *time sequence, to solve a problem, to verify a concept, to think critically*—the student should be made aware of the aids the writer and the publisher have provided:

Format clues:

Chapter titles

Chapter subheads

Bold-face and italic types
 Illustrations
 Maps
 Charts
 Graphs

Language clues:

First, second, etc.
As follows
In this order
To illustrate
Therefore
Accordingly
So
For instance
For example
For these reasons
The most important

Punctuation clues:

Periods
 Question marks
 Commas
 Colons

To sum up: Instruction in social studies should prepare a way to read, a process of reading, as much as it should leave a residuum of ideas.

SCIENCE: VOCABULARY

Of all the reading material faced by students, none is more heavily freighted with special vocabulary than science. The careful and gradual introduction of new vocabulary is not uniformly pursued in science textbooks. It will pay dividends to examine science material intended for group instruction for its vocabulary burden. Many teachers who do this for the first time are appalled. It is so easy for us, as adults who read the material casually, to overlook how many new terms are being introduced. When we read each line carefully,

asking ourselves, where students would have met that word before and what basis in experience they have had to understand it, we see the unfamiliar terms leap out in a milling crowd.

Moreover, we soon note that words in science are used with a greater precision of meaning than those in literature or in the social studies. We can tolerate far fewer "blurred" words in reading a page. One immediate effect of this demand for precision is on the rate of comprehension. Science materials must be read much more deliberately than literary materials or even social studies materials.

SCIENCE: IDEAS

Point out to students immediately the compactness of scientific writing—the density of concepts per inch of copy compared with literary or social studies materials. The student will know then that his attention must be concentrated unwaveringly. He will know that he must never pass by a paragraph without being able to translate the gist of its content into his own words.

We recommend much more reading aloud of science text material than is commonly the practice. Read aloud especially those sections in which key ideas are being developed. Then supplement this reading aloud with discussion and the use of pictures, graphs, charts, and demonstrations. Science, particularly for the adolescent, needs to have its symbols firmly attached to reality.

At the start of the reading of new material, call attention to the chapter or unit title. Study the preview section, which outlines what is to be covered, if there is such a section. Otherwise, duplicate one yourself. In scientific writing it is very important for the reader to have the over-all structure clearly in mind in order that he may fit the individual concepts, which come all too rapidly, into a set of understandable relationships. He must have this skeleton, or he will get lost in the details. And the details will have no meaning. It is the relationship of details which is important in reading scientific material.

Not only is it necessary to get a good, clear reader "set" before new scientific material is read, but it is important to provide a chance to look back at the over-all structure regularly—to make certain that the relationships of the parts to the whole are still clear.

MATHEMATICS: VOCABULARY

Mathematics operates with three vocabularies: a verbal symbol vocabulary, a numerical symbol vocabulary, and a literal symbol vocabulary. Some mathematical statements use only verbal symbols:

The area of a rectangle is equal to the product of its length and width.

Some mathematical statements use only numerical symbols:

$$10 \times 5 = 50$$

Some mathematical statements use only literal symbols:

$$A = lw$$

Some mathematical statements mix all three vocabularies together:

What is the area of a rectangle where l is 5 feet and w is 10?

The referent, the object or idea, for which each kind of symbol stands has to be clear before the student can use the symbols to advantage. This is difficult enough when any one kind of symbol is used, let alone three. It is somewhat analogous to understanding a man who mixes English, French, and Spanish in the same sentence.

Whereas context is the most important clue to meaning in most reading, it functions very ineffectively in mathematics. Mathematical statement is so terse that, for the most part, each symbol is self-contained. Other symbols in the statement do not provide as many clues to meaning as they would in most other fields. Thus the reader must carry to the statements the necessary context, knowing that he will get little help from the surroundings in which the symbol is imbedded.

The ability to manage the three vocabularies should be thought of as operational competence—that is, ability to use the symbols to solve quantitative problems. Ability to define a symbol in words, or in numbers or letters, or in combinations of these three does not mean that the student can put the symbol to appropriate uses.

MATHEMATICS: IDEAS

Rate of comprehension must be slowed down in mathematics. Mathematicians aim to say no more and no less than they do say. This means that every word and symbol used has a particular purpose and no necessary word or symbol is lacking.

The reader must read carefully from the first word. He does not have a paragraph to apprise him gradually of what lies ahead, as he does in almost every other subject, including science.

The reader must use the same text both to obtain the general structure or arrangement of relationships and to secure the details to fit into that structure or arrangement.

In other subjects, he can usually read along through successive pieces of text, without as much necessity for constant re-reading. In mathematics, he must almost always reread a statement: first to note the conditions of the problem, the relationships, the processes; and then to note and use the specific quantities presented in words, numbers, or letters. As a matter of fact, he must often, perhaps even most of the time, read still again to see that he has fitted the two—structure and detail—together properly; that he has missed neither some essentials of the structure (failed to see a necessary operation) nor some of the detail (omitted a necessary quantity).

Two final considerations: one concerns the potency of parts of statements in mathematics; the other, its developmental nature. Students need considerable practice in searching a story problem for those words and phrases that determine what is to be solved. These are "potent" words, in Thorndike's terminology. Students also need to be impressed with the careful building of one understanding on another in mathematics. If they fail to grasp earlier processes, they cannot comprehend later ones. This is not quite as true of social studies or even science. Students must be encouraged to ask and ask again until they are sure of understanding.

This overview of reading in the separate subjects may have roused some protest as you read. Did you think, How can I do this along with everything else? Certainly this is a very proper inquiry. But there is only one answer: If you do not provide reading instruction, you will have to find a substitute for books in your teaching.

Reading for Enjoyment

A recent survey of reading habits among adults showed these discouraging facts. About one half of all those studied read no books at all. Some one quarter of the group read from one to nine books a year. About one fifth read ten or more books in a year's time. Only 7 per cent read as many as fifty or more books per year.⁴ It may be that one of the factors contributing to this rather unflattering picture of reading habits in the United States is a high school education conditioning adults negatively to reading books. It has been stated that:

. . . much of the material which is presented in textbooks is altogether inappropriate for the cultivation of reading habits. When the history of the United States, for example, is condensed into a book of 500 or 600 pages, it has to be compressed to such an extent that the anecdotes which would make it a lively, interesting subject are almost, if not entirely, left out. Every sentence has to carry an idea requiring minute attention. The book is a compact body of factual statements which does not invite or permit fluent reading. Every sentence must be studied analytically. In mastering the contents of the ordinary textbook in history, the pupil cultivates habits of intellectual procedure which may prevent him throughout life from undertaking the type of reading which is appropriate for most of the materials which he will encounter in books and magazines.

Not only is this so, but in most of the recitations which the pupil attends the teachers show ingenuity in torturing the subject studied by asking all kinds of questions which train the pupil in the most deliberate and minute dissection of what he has read. The result is that whenever a pupil takes up a book he begins to ramble in his thinking, indulging in all kinds of speculation as to the possible questions that one might raise. Pupils begin to think that it requires from three to six months to read through a book.⁵

This quotation does not mean that students should not read textbooks. By no means. The textbook is one of the teacher's major tools in guiding learning. But the teacher must recognize that the text may create negative attitudes toward reading if that is all the reading the student is encouraged to do. "Reading for Enjoyment"

⁴ Angus Campbell and Charles A. Metzner, *Public Use of the Library* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Institute for Social Research, 1950), pp. 1-2.

⁵ *What the High Schools Ought to Teach* (Washington, D. C.: American Council on Education, 1940), pp. 12-13.

is a unit sometimes taught in a single English class—as though no other subject field could provide enjoyable reading! Consider the fascinating reading in biography and special historical fiction. Many of the books in popular history provide a fascinating account of the pageant of history. Authors such as de Kruif and Peattie have made scientific writing as thrilling as a mystery story. There is abundant current material in the popular magazines on most of the topics taught in high school science classes. The articles are written so that science becomes an exciting and satisfying experience. For the study of languages, the personal anecdotes of travels abroad, the lives of immigrants of various national groups in America, and the translated fiction of the foreign culture are all excellent materials.

One important aspect of reading instruction is the development of skill in the use of the library. There are not many trained librarians in our schools—not nearly so many as we need. Often, therefore, the task devolves upon the individual teacher, assuming of course that the school has a library. Many high schools have no libraries, and many more have poor or wholly inadequate facilities. In such schools the teacher will have to rely on the local public library. Whatever the subject, using the library as a place to find enjoyable and informative material is an important part of the reading program.

Guides to Better Reading

Now that we have seen the reading problems in the different fields of study and the general need to extend reading interests and library skills, we require some guides to action. Here are some suggestions:

Diagnose the reading level of material provided for the student. Examine all texts and collateral reading carefully to see what special reading difficulties may be encountered. Clues will, of course, be found in the introduction to the book itself: For what grade level was this particular book written? On what basis was this reading level set? In addition, read the material for some of the special problems in understanding the concepts introduced.

Arrange an environment conducive to the enjoyment of reading.

See to it that the room is a pleasant place in which to read silently. Color, light, pictures, comfortable tables and chairs, growing plants and other decorative features will all aid in creating a place in which reading can thrive.

Provide a variety of reading materials. After diagnosing the reading level of the text, have on hand books and other reading materials that are both much more difficult and much easier than the text. Then you can guide an individual student on the basis of his level of skill.

Each room should have its own library of supplementary reading material. Here the teacher can have at hand just the right items for the students without having to go through the procedures required in a larger school or public library. A browsing shelf, with new items displayed prominently and invitingly, and a lending system for taking books home will be of inestimable help in encouraging reading in any subject field. Using student help in organizing and arranging such a library is a very fine way to teach simple library procedures. Getting students to lend their own books to others will also encourage reading.

Assist the students in special problems of reading peculiar to the subject field. Make lists of the specialized vocabulary that will be encountered in the week ahead and go over it with the class. It is useful to have large, lettered charts on which difficult or special words are presented and defined, with both a dictionary definition and an illustration of usage. Use the blackboard liberally in writing out new words and word phrases and give students an opportunity to raise questions.

Gear class discussion to the kind of reading skill you desire to develop. If reading is to be for enjoyment, do not kill this attitude by seeking detail and fact and intricate analysis as an outcome of the reading. Instead, raise problems of attitude, feeling, emotion, bias, new ideas.

Divide the class into reading levels for some aspects of instruction. Often a teacher can obtain copies of different texts at different reading levels. Since most texts in a given field cover approximately the same material, though with varying emphases, this procedure can make for very rich learning as each reading group contributes to the

total class discussion those aspects of the problem particularly emphasized in its book.⁶

Consult the school files regarding reading scores of students in your class. Many schools conduct routine reading tests of all entering students, but teachers do not make adequate use of such information. A teacher can save himself much worry and disturbance by knowing beforehand the reading level of the students in his class. Then the job of planning reading material for individual abilities is made easier.

Conduct a study of class reading interests and habits. A simple inventory will often provide a teacher with important information about the general interest range and reading level of the class.

Such an inventory might include the following:

1. Do you enjoy reading?
2. What kinds of things do you like to read most?
3. What kinds of things do you like to read least?
4. Do your parents like to read a lot? What do they read?
5. How many books do your parents have at home?
6. Do you take any newspapers at home? What sections do you like to read best?
7. What magazines do your parents take? Do you read them? Which ones?
8. Do you wear glasses now? Have you ever worn glasses?
9. Do you feel you have any special difficulty in reading? If so, what is it?
10. What are your special interests or hobbies?

A similar inventory may be sent home for the parents to fill out regarding the student's reading habits and the parents' own attitudes toward reading. On the basis of such information, the teacher can determine where students are having difficulty, and where he can guide them toward adequate adult reading habits. After such a study has been made, the teacher should place the results in the student's counseling folder so that other teachers may make use of the same data without having to quiz students constantly on their interests and habits.

Read aloud to your classes. Teachers often forget that reading

⁶ For a detailed analysis of reading groups in class work, see Guy L. Bond and Bertha Handlan, *Adapting Instruction in Reading to Individual Differences*, Series on Individualization of Instruction, No. 5 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1948), pp. 65-70.

Is this the social studies teacher or the school librarian? The fact that we cannot be certain illustrates a point: a good school librarian is also a teacher; a good teacher is also a librarian.

The librarian's attitude toward his domain can greatly influence the students' attitude towards learning. Is the school library a place where absolute silence must be maintained at all times? Or is low-voiced conversation between students and librarian and among students themselves not only allowed but encouraged? The librarian who welcomes students to the library, who is friendly in showing them the uses of card files and indexes, and who shares their research projects with them is a good teacher—and a good librarian.

On the other hand, a teacher's attitude towards the materials that deal with his subject also can have a profound effect on his students. Is the textbook the only source of information in the classroom? Or are there files and clippings and pamphlets, magazines, and books of many kinds ready at hand? The dreamy-eyed girl at the back of the room may take a little more interest in the study of Latin American history if she discovers a copy of *The Bridge of San Luis Rey* on a shelf in the classroom and takes it home to read. The practical-minded boy in front may have his interest heightened by reading some current affairs pamphlets.

The teacher who understands that different students need different materials and who sees to it that these materials are easily available is inadvertently a librarian—and also a good teacher. [Photo courtesy U. S. Office of Education]





A high school is an essential part of the fabric of community life. Its goal is to serve all the children of the community. In addition, through evening programs, the high school offers educational opportunities to many adults. It is, in a sense, the "teacher of the community."

But what can the community teach the high school? More and more, we are becoming aware that by studying the community in which they live, boys and girls learn about the important institutions through which our social life finds its expression. Business, government, industry, and other forms of community life become real and understandable. Problems of community life become defined. Cultural resources are explored and used. By studying the community, boys and girls see themselves in an enlarged perspective.

Through both direct and incidental learnings, community exploration can serve useful purposes in social studies, in science study, in the study of music, art, literature, business, and other subjects. What direct and incidental learnings are resulting from this community interview by a junior high school girl and boy? What is being learned by the group of girls discussing zone maps of their community? [Photos courtesy Atlanta Public Schools (top) and The School Executive (bottom)]

aloud can be a very exciting teaching technique. If there is some highly dramatic, interesting, or complicated portion of the subject matter, take time out to read a few paragraphs. If this is followed by discussion, reading will be a less mysterious process for many students.

Teachers should use reading aloud by students with caution. Few are skilled in the technique. For many students, oral reading itself is a barrier to developing good silent reading habits. To read aloud with interest is, however, a valuable skill for any future parent and might well be developed as part of a family living course. Where families read aloud together, many important personal as well as intellectual values are achieved.

Do a case study of a reading problem. Each beginning teacher should focus his attention on this problem during one period of his early teaching. A valuable device is to do a concentrated case study of a student with a reading handicap. Then, through analysis of an individual problem and the remedial and instructional techniques developed to meet that problem, the teacher will gain important insights to carry over to others with reading difficulties.

Clues to Reading Retardation

Retardation in reading is usually due to a complex of causes. Mental, physical, and emotional factors may all be involved. None of these can be treated in isolation but only in association with the others.

The retarded reader may often be identified by the following characteristics:

He seems unable to do the necessary reading.

He himself is dissatisfied with his reading, revealing his dissatisfaction, either through specific complaint or through objections to any reading assignment.

His reading test scores are in the lowest fourth for his grade.

He can use words in speaking that he seems unable to comprehend when they are written.

If he is required to do schoolwork that does not call for any reading, he is average or above in achievement.

He shows special personal problems, such as poor family attitude toward school; unusual nervousness; extreme hostility toward teach-

ers; extreme apathy toward classroom occurrences; sluggish physical performance.

This list covers general clues. However, the teacher will also want to note students who manifest special visual difficulty in any of the following ways:

Holding the book very close to the eyes.

Holding the book very far away.

A severe squint.

Odd and consistent reversals of words during an oral exercise.

Persistent complaint about headaches as an excuse not to study.

Falling asleep in class as soon as a study period occurs.

Becoming hyperactive as soon as study period arrives.

Inconsistent use of glasses; often students with a reading problem will forget or break glasses.

Extremely heavy glasses.

Cross-eyedness or a damaged eye.

Lip movements while reading; actual oral reading accompanying silent reading or residual muscular movements from poor training in reading.

Moving the head to follow the line of the page. A good reader will move the eyes; a poor reader, who reads word by word, will move the head also. Often this head movement, though not perceptible from the front, can be seen by watching the back neck muscles.

Monotonous oral reading, which usually indicates reading word by word instead of for the sense of the phrase.

The Diagnosis of Reading Difficulty

Many excellent reading tests will aid the teacher in discovering group and individual reading problems. Some of the most widely used are the following:

Cooperative English Test: Reading Comprehension (Educational Testing Service).

Nelson-Denny Reading Test (Houghton-Mifflin).

Iowa Silent Reading Tests (World Book Company).⁷

⁷ For detailed descriptions and reviews of these and other reading tests, see O. K. Buros, *Mental Measurements Yearbooks* (Highland Park, N. J.: The Gryphon Press).

In addition, the teacher may want to devise a simple reading test of his own. This is easily done. The teacher chooses a selection of reading matter that seems to be typical of the kind of reading he will expect of his students. He counts the words in the selection carefully. Then he makes duplicate copies of this passage and gives them to the class under optimal conditions of relaxation and motivation. He sets a time limit, asking each student to mark where he finished when time was called. Then he gives the group a set of questions about the selection to test comprehension. The questions should be similar to those that will be asked on reading material in his class. One teacher may seek over-all understanding of mood or point of view, while another may want students to grasp the sequence of thought or retain particular details. A careful checking of several such simple tests will quickly reveal to the teacher individual reading patterns. One student may read slowly but grasp all he reads; another may read rapidly but be very confused and vague about the content of the selection. Students may be able to obtain some kinds of knowledge from reading, and not other kinds. Thus, the teacher will be able to guide individuals toward more adequate reading habits for each subject.

General Remedial Procedures

Many schools have special reading classes for seriously retarded readers. Such classes, however, are still the exception rather than the rule. Teachers specially trained to do remedial teaching are also rare. Thus, the regular classroom teacher may want to provide some remedial aid for those students who need it most, over and beyond the general reading instruction that has already been recommended above.

Teachers who wish to help retarded students need additional reading and study in this area. Numerous excellent guides are available, since educators have been working intensively in this field for many years. There are also university centers where summer training may be obtained in special reading skills. One summer spent in such a center is a wise investment of time, which will be repaid a hundred-fold in classroom success. For the beginning teacher and for the

student who is looking forward to teaching in the near future, the following remedial techniques are suggested:

Develop rapport with those students who need remedial assistance. Such students are often very happy to have someone take an interest in their problem, though they are sometimes extremely discouraged about the possibilities of doing anything about it. You will need to set aside some time several days a week for individual work if a remedial approach is taken.

Help the student gain insight into the basis of his own difficulty. After giving him some reading tests, review the results with him. Discuss his study habits with him. Perhaps he has prevented himself from overcoming his handicap by poor study conditions.

Provide for recreational reading. Often you will have to start at a very low level of reading, even allowing the retarded student to work on comic books if that is all he can bring himself to read. The next step is to read some of the more flamboyant paper-bound books or popular magazines, even though the choice of subject matter may leave much to be desired. Because most retarded readers are negatively conditioned to any kind of reading, the classroom teacher should permit the student to read widely material of his own choosing even if this deviates considerably from the content of the course.

Find a problem important to the student, requiring him to use some reading skill in order to obtain a solution.

Discuss reading material with him both before and after he has read it. Through a friendly and informal chat, the teacher can aid the student in looking for meaning in what he reads, in reducing initial anxiety when confronted by a printed page, and in reading for ideas.

Use some of the diagnostic devices available. Each student may have a key problem of his own. Diagnostic tests should be used to reveal that problem. Some students have inadequate reading skills, which need special corrective exercises. Some students have such limited vocabularies that new words cannot be understood in context. Some students are handicapped because of language confusions developed through learning two languages—one at home and another at school.

Concentrate assistance, after rapport has been achieved, on the

work of the class. Do not make the remedial procedures so different that the student feels left out and isolated and cannot understand the essence of daily work. The daily assignments in reading should be part of his reading work and should be the basis for special attention so that he can continue to be a regular member of the class.

Discuss the student with his other teachers. It often helps if the cooperation of all his teachers can be enlisted so that he gets support in all his classes. The confidence gained in one area will not then be undermined through repeated failure in another. It is also important to see that duplication of effort is avoided. If one teacher has better rapport with the student, then that teacher should be the one to undertake the greater portion of the remedial aid.

The great emphasis that high school teaching places on ability to read means that more and more classroom instruction must be devoted to the acquiring of adequate reading skills. If we want the student to understand the material provided—if this content is worth learning—then we have an obligation to help him obtain the skills whereby that content may be learned. Heretofore, reading instruction ceased at the end of elementary school; yet high school demands increased cultivation of old skills and development of new skills. Many students are badly handicapped through poor habits or through poor attitudes. The teacher must be fully informed about the reading attitudes and abilities of his class before he can offer appropriate instruction.

Listening, Writing, and Speaking in the High School

The vast amount of attention given to remedial reading and the whole problem of reading instruction points to one of the basic facts of life in school—that the student is expected to learn more by means of reading than by almost any other means. However, this is a condition that we would do well to modify. In both childhood and adult life, learning takes place through the other senses as well. In fact, genuine social learning is not only a matter of taking in through sight

or hearing (or touch or smell!), but also a matter of giving out, of expressing by way of writing and speaking and gesturing. The student hears, talks, and writes as well as reads.

A word must be interjected here about the reasons such problems are included in a discussion of general methods. It might occur to some that these skills are rightfully in the domain of the special-subject teachers, such as teachers of English, speech, music. However, as was indicated in the discussion of reading, every teacher is involved in communicating and exploring ideas. In any classroom, the students listen, write, and speak, often all three within a very few minutes, repeating the processes day in and day out. In whatever area of the curriculum the teacher helps students to learn good habits, progress toward more adult patterns can be expected. Wherever the teacher ignores this aspect of teaching, students with handicaps in listening, writing, or speaking will not be able to learn as effectively as others.

Listening Skills

Listening is undoubtedly the most neglected communication skill. Somehow, it seems to be assumed, competence in recording and reacting to spoken language "just grows." Yet all the evidence we have is to the contrary. Listening, like all the other language arts, only develops reliably when it is directly taught.

THE SPECIAL PROBLEMS OF THE HANDICAPPED

Students with marked physical, emotional, or intellectual handicaps present special problems in the communication skills. A student with limited intelligence will not be able to pay attention as closely as, or for as long as, a normal student; thus he cannot absorb as much through listening alone. The slow student often misses the essential cues, as in a radio mystery play, and does not understand the reason for the action. The more subtle the cue, whether oral or written, the more difficult for the slow learner. The play-on-words type of humor is lost on the dull student. We often notice the look of perplexity that crosses the face of some student who has not seen the joke that is sending the rest of the class into hysterics. Where this occurs time after time, some lack of mental acuity may well be involved.

The teacher must also be alert to discover those who are hard

of hearing or whose hearing is temporarily impaired. Some school systems provide a hearing test for all entering students, and the information thus obtained is entered on the student's permanent record. Teachers will be informed of the results at the time the test is taken, but, like all such information, it will not be useful in succeeding semesters unless each teacher consults the records for all his students.

The student who constantly says, "But I didn't hear you make that announcement," or "I didn't catch the page number when it was given," may have a genuine hearing difficulty. Before the teacher judges such a student as lazy or provocative, he might well check to see whether the student has a hearing problem. For example:

Nancy consistently failed to get her homework in on time. The excuse was, "But I didn't hear you." After audiometer tests were given, Mr. Harvey discovered that Nancy had no hearing at all in one ear. When her seat was changed to the other side of the room, so that her good ear was in the best position to catch what was said from the front of the room, Nancy's work improved considerably. Nancy herself had not realized that she had a hearing disability until the test was administered.

There is some lack of agreement as to what is meant by deafness and by hearing loss. However, most studies of school children indicate that between 5 and 10 per cent have some definite hearing defect.⁸ The available studies on hearing loss make it clear that such a physical limitation will definitely make personal and social adjustment difficult. Since so much of school activity depends upon what can be "heard," the teacher will want to be especially sensitive to this problem.

What can the teacher do about students who are slow learners or whose hearing is impaired? He should employ several methods of making directions clear and of providing materials for learning. He should not only give oral instructions regarding assignments, but should write these on the blackboard. Thus both sight and hearing may be used to get the important cues.

⁸ R. G. Barker, B. A. Wright, and M. R. Gonick, *Adjustment to Physical Handicap and Illness*, Bulletin 55 (New York: Social Science Research Council, 1946), p. 163. See also C. D. O'Connor and Alice Streng, "Teaching the Acoustically Handicapped," in *The Education of Exceptional Children*, Forty-ninth Yearbook, Part II, National Society for the Study of Education (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1950), p. 156.

ROOM NOISES

A program for good listening will involve a consideration of the physical environment, as witness the following:

Harry Walters, the new principal, decided to visit classrooms early in the semester. In Miss Avery's class there was a persistent hum in the air. It took Mr. Walters some time to find that the heating system was not working so well as it should. Whenever the mechanism was on, the hum began. Mr. Walters made a note to have the system repaired. In Mr. Ringle's room an echo seemed to roll around whenever anyone talked. The slightest sound seemed to be magnified by the room itself. It was very difficult to hear anyone with a high voice. Students were uncomfortable and Mr. Ringle could not quite understand why. Examination disclosed the echo to be an acoustical problem. Mr. Walters was able to get the advice of a sound engineer, who suggested that the room be fitted with sound-absorbent material. The whole atmosphere of the classes changed because something was done about the noise problem.

A word should also be said about out-of-class noises. Often schools are placed beside train tracks, on streets with heavy traffic, near airports, or next to the school playing field. Such conditions impose a handicap on teaching and learning.

Besides the out-of-class noises, there are always some noises originating in the various classrooms. Furniture is bound to squeak, scrape, and bump; doors slam in the corridor; chords and discords filter in from the music room. This is not to say that in a good classroom a pin can be heard to drop, although moderately quiet periods are desirable from time to time. For six hours a day the teacher will have to adjust to various kinds and degrees of noise and sound. It will be wise for every teacher to learn early to be tolerant. The class can be relaxed and responsive only if the teacher himself accepts with good humor the inevitable noises of the school and the out-of-doors.

CLASSROOM PROCEDURES

Let us turn now to the problem of training in listening. Many hours of life are spent in listening to conversation, to speakers, to supervisors, to television, to the radio. In the classroom, being able to follow what is spoken is a great asset. For students continuing to college, the ability to listen and then make intelligible notes is an essential skill, which can be developed in the high school classroom.

Just as students come to the high school deficient in reading skills, so they come with bad habits of listening. These may be as great a handicap as inability to read at the proper grade level.

Once it is established that the hearing organs of the students are normal, that the acoustics of the room are at least adequate, the teacher will want to check on attention level. After a discussion is started, the teacher should stop and inquire, "Now what was the main point?" or, "Bill, can you trace the steps we have come in our discussion?" Through such devices, the teacher may gauge the attention level of various students. Can they actually follow an oral presentation? The teacher may learn, for example, that many students are not used to hearing intellectual conversation. Thus, learning to exchange ideas is akin to learning a foreign language. Catching cue words, listening for the main idea, getting the sense of an involved statement—these are problems for training.

Next, the teacher will want to introduce tape recordings. Here the speaker is not present, only his words. Watching the faces of youngsters while a recording is being played may tell the teacher a great deal about their listening habits. An oral or written quiz after the recording may also reveal students with a problem in listening.

The teacher will want to tie in out-of-school listening as much as possible. He should be acquainted with the radio and television programs that are current favorites, and should make every effort to sample the fare that is enjoyed by students in order to know what kinds of "educational" influences are at work outside the classroom. If any attempt at all is to be made to develop more discriminating listening in radio and television, it will probably have to be in the classroom.

Many students fail to listen to the more mature programs because of (1) lack of awareness of their existence; (2) lack of encouragement at home; (3) negative conditioning because of inability to understand what is going on; and (4) lack of interest in the subject matter of the programs. The teacher can well afford to work on the two latter problems. Where topics of programs are announced in advance, the teacher may cultivate interest in class through discussion or presentation of the same topic, showing the relevance or significance of the topic to present-day problems.

It is often possible to assign students to listen to programs just

as they are assigned to read a chapter from a library book. It must be remembered, however, that such an assignment may present difficulty to some students because of lack of a receiving set or interference with the preferences of other members of the family. Such problems should be explored in class by the teacher before making assignments. It is often wise to make radio and television listening an alternative to another kind of assignment; for example, reading about the problem. At the same time, the teacher will want to encourage students to do the suggested listening in order to widen their contact with acceptable adult materials.

One major deterrent to adequate listening habits is the notion that whenever the student sits still to listen, he is to be entertained. Students unfortunately develop a pattern of listening that says, in effect, "We are either entertained when we listen, or we are bored; there is no middle ground." It is this attitude that interferes with adequate listening in class and certainly militates against listening to radio and television programs that require some critical reaction.

In brief, each teacher must be aware of the problem of developing adequate listening habits on the part of his students, not only in order to make for more effective learning in school, but also to provide a basis for more discriminating and intelligent listening and learning outside of school.

Writing Skills

Mrs. Blake had noticed Steve the very first day of class. He was a short, husky fellow with a serious expression. Whenever he spoke, the other students seemed to listen with respect. What he said always made excellent sense, whether it was a problem of classroom management or a discussion about the chapter of the text. Steve was, as Mrs. Blake put it in her own mind, a "natural-born leader." He had maturity, intelligence, and evidently could speak the language of the other students. He was the captain of the baseball team, and junior class president as well.

Then came the great blow! The first assignment consisted of answers to questions about the problem area the class had been studying. Steve's paper was shocking. Although his answers were up to his usual level of mature insight and judicious comment, he misspelled, it seemed, every other word. He even confused the letters in "the" so that it came out "eht" or "teh" almost as often as the right

way around. Steve readily admitted that spelling just completely baffled him. He spent most of his time in English working on his spelling, but as far as he was concerned, it was hopeless. He was planning to enter the nearby technical school for a year of auto-mechanics training, but he was almost resigned to the fact that he might not be admitted because of this handicap. He was frightened at the thought of completing an entrance blank because of the spelling involved.

It is a perennial complaint that high school students today do not know how to write; like all sweeping complaints, it needs some careful scrutiny. There is no good evidence that comparable groups of students write poorer than those of prior generations. However, this may be beside the point. It may be more relevant to be concerned whether skills in written communication are adequate to meet the demands of today's world.

As we consider the demands of adult life upon the majority of our young people, it becomes more and more apparent that training in writing should focus on the kind of communication skills they will use. What, then, should be the goal of the teacher? Undoubtedly, the main objective should be to make writing a pleasant process, and to assist those who write to gain fluency in conveying important ideas or emotions.

There are several ways in which the classroom teacher of any subject can work toward this objective. Students should be encouraged to write *when they have something important to say*. Too often, students are trying to express ideas that do not interest them, the sole motivation being punishment or fear. The pressure on students to write "because it is required" is as much an inhibiting factor as any other. The teacher would do well to develop some genuine need for students to write. For example, the class itself might try to get a letter on a local issue published in the local paper, or it might want to communicate with the principal or superintendent about a matter of importance to the students. Some incentive that places the stress upon the *outcome*, rather than on the process of writing, may serve to release many students from the dread of seeing their own handwriting.

The teacher of any subject requiring any kind of written work should use the occasion to develop with students some idea of stand-

ards of accomplishment. It is senseless to blame all the students' failings on the English teachers, or, as many high school teachers are prone to do, on their elementary school education. Learning continues in the high school. Even though students arrive with handicaps or poor habits, the high school teacher has no right to shun responsibility. Like the teaching of reading, the teaching of writing is a problem for all teachers who utilize written material in their work with students.

If students fail to write complete sentences in answering a question on an examination in history, in physics, in Spanish, in commercial law, then that teacher should encourage them to discuss some of the elements of good writing. Through reward and praise, by posting on bulletin boards examples of good written work, by reading aloud to the class some of the better materials turned in by students, by constantly pointing out, through marginal comments, the good ideas or good phrases that the student used, the teacher can go a long way in developing a positive attitude toward writing.

Many students, it must be remembered, find writing a painful chore. At best, their achievement in writing may have been mediocre. This means that in order to get honest student effort and eventual improvement of quality, the teacher must stress both the over-all strengths and the specific sections where the student has written well. The best practice is to make many comments on the student's written work, pointed most of the time toward recognition of good material. Even if the quality of the work is not of the best, it is recommended that comments such as "good try," "fine start," "shows considerable improvement," or "good choice of words" be made at the end of the exercise.

The teacher should avoid overemphasis on errors. Often, when reading examinations or reports, the teacher is tempted to circle all spelling errors, to make large red checks where incorrect punctuation has been used, to point out all incomplete sentences. The student who spells poorly doubtless has had many years of failure in the subject. To continue to point out all failures to him is probably the least profitable thing the teacher can do in helping him improve. It is worth the effort to assist students with words common in writing; but class time spent in learning to spell words used infrequently

might better be employed in developing ideas, concepts, and attitudes. Large charts with correct spellings, definitions, and appropriate illustrations help make important words useful tools for the student whose fear of misspelling a word may keep him from demonstrating his knowledge. We do not expect anyone to pound a nail without a hammer; let us not expect students to express ideas if we fail to make available some of the essential tools.

At this point we need to repeat a basic concept of good teaching: It is a mistake to make all grades dependent on written examinations, excluding all other modes of evaluation. We know that some people express themselves well orally, some in writing, some in the graphic arts. The good teacher will provide many ways for students to demonstrate learning. Overemphasis on writing, to the exclusion of other ways of showing competence, has eliminated many students from school and retarded the growth of others who stayed on.

Speaking Skills

In the average classroom much emphasis is placed on speaking as a way of participating in learning.⁹ For this reason, the teacher who gives students many opportunities for oral expression will need to be aware of those who lack speaking skill. As in the case of deficient facility in writing, many students who otherwise would make informed contributions to class work remain silent because of inability to speak easily and well. Direct instruction is required if these students are to have full opportunity to learn.

In general, students will speak better if the situation is relaxed, if they have something important to impart, and if the "public" nature of the occasion is less significant than the sharing of a vital experience. The use of group work (see Chapter 10) will help to provide opportunities for this kind of speaking. The low level of oral communication skills in most high school students implies that all teachers should focus their efforts on aiding students to speak better, to speak more freely, to speak with greater enjoyment.

All oral work in a classroom should be preceded by a class dis-

⁹ National Society for the Study of Education, "Teaching Children with Speech Handicaps," in *The Education of Exceptional Children*, Forty-ninth Yearbook, Part II (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1950), pp. 176-193.

cussion about what makes a good oral presentation. No matter what the subject matter, when a student is asked to impart knowledge to the rest of the class, make an explanation, give directions, report progress, it is important that these activities aid in the development of speaking skill. This can be assured if teachers and students discuss what goes into a good oral report, then list together criteria that may be used in evaluating these efforts. Then, when agreement has been reached by the class, the list should be posted in a conspicuous place. When a report has been given, the teacher and the class may refer to the list with the question, How can we improve? The teacher should at all times find points that were good in the oral presentation and emphasize them.

In the area of speaking, many students have problems that are peculiar to them. One particularly important problem exists for the student from a home where a foreign language is spoken most of the time. For this student, learning good habits of expression in English is especially difficult. He will need more sensitive help than the average child, particularly because of the public nature of speech situations.

In setting up a list of factors in good speaking, the teacher should use the same criteria that he would apply to himself. The major factors are clarity, interest, ease of audience understanding, directness of contact with audience, poise and relaxation, and absence of distracting mannerisms. A class can quickly and easily build with the teacher a list of such factors. Using an evaluation committee when oral work is in progress also helps students focus on skill development. But this should not be overemphasized. The point of oral work is communication to others. It is important to keep adolescents, already highly self-conscious, from being so self-conscious that they are completely tongue-tied and emotionally upset by stage fright.

SUMMARY

Communicating with others is an essential element in adult life. The high school plays a significant role in developing communication skills to a level adequate for dealing with the demands of work and college and social intercourse. By recognizing the specific problems

that may be met by students in the areas of reading, writing, listening, and speaking, the high school teacher can perform a vital service for the adolescent.

The highly verbal nature of our high school curriculum makes it imperative that each high school teacher consider himself not only a teacher of history or biology or music or mechanical drawing, but also a teacher of reading and writing and listening and speaking.

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Adjustment to School Life: Discipline I

STUDENTS WHO are misbehaving are not learning the lessons of the classroom. This does not imply that they are not learning; obviously, they are learning a great deal. They may be learning how to annoy the girl in the next seat, how to shoot a rubber band so that the ammunition hits accurately, how to tip a chair back just so that it just misses falling over, how to pile books so that they topple at just the right moment, and so on. But they are not learning about more important matters: the reasons for the continuing international tension, or how to figure the board feet required in constructing a garage, or how to evaluate news reporting on television. Just as the slow learner or the student with a sight or hearing handicap requires special assistance, so does the chronic troublemaker. Not all misbehavior in the classroom is serious, but some students do display far from satisfactory personal adjustment to life in school. In this and the following chapter we will discuss the role of the teacher faced with minor classroom misbehavior as well as with the more serious problems produced by personality maladjustment.

What Is Discipline?

Few problems loom larger for the beginning teacher than those of establishing and maintaining order in a classroom. It is nonsense to say that a good teacher does not have discipline problems. The better the teaching techniques used, the fewer the problems, true; but student misbehavior is a common hazard for all teachers.

Just why is discipline such a difficult problem? When neighborhood friends are planning a dance, there is remarkably little horseplay or interference with those doing the planning. If there is someone who interferes with what the group wants to do, the other members of the group either quell him or oust him. In such a group it is important to note that, first, the members are actively engaged in an enterprise that is really important to them; second, they chose this activity freely; and, third, membership in the group is voluntary.

Now take the typical classroom. The topics of study and the activities for learning are not often selected by the students. Rather, certain subjects and routines must be endured because the teacher, the course of study, the superintendent, or some other remote and nebulous source says so. Nor, for the most part, is the student in school of his own free choice. He knows that there are very drastic social measures that can be taken against him—what, exactly, he is not sure—were he to remain away from school without a genuine excuse. His parents usually insist on his attendance at school. He has no way out except to comply with the requirements of this adult world until he graduates into adulthood himself. Even though students may genuinely desire knowledge, may actually enjoy school more than the aimless hours of vacation—and this attitude is more prevalent than we might suppose—still, the involuntary nature of the situation has its psychological effects.

Major Categories of Discipline Problems

It is not at all surprising that from time to time any student will rebel against alien subject matter, enforced inactivity, involuntary attendance, tasks that are beyond his capacity. This is what might be called “normal” misbehavior. However, sometimes reactions to the ordinary demands of the school are surprisingly violent; indi-

viduals seem unable to adjust even for short periods to the expectations of the school. This might be called "abnormal" misbehavior.

The teacher thus has two major tasks in dealing with classroom behavior. First, he needs skill in handling the normal misbehavior situations with tact, understanding, and diplomacy. Second, he needs insight into abnormal misbehavior, with an understanding of what the school can do and what other aid may be required. The teacher's action in handling both normal and abnormal misbehavior is usually termed *discipline*. "The teacher disciplines the class" is a commonly accepted phrase. By it we mean that the teacher is exercising his authority to produce a classroom atmosphere in which learning may continue, either on the part of an individual or on the part of the group.

Desirable Classroom Discipline

Most of us carry a mental picture of how teachers in our own experience managed to discipline their classes. Some teachers were stern, cold, forbidding; others shrilled at the class constantly; and still others lost their temper on the average of once a week and frightened everyone in the class. But some seemed calm, approachable, unruffled by misbehavior. It may be revealing here to recall incidents in our own school history when we received some form of teacher discipline:

One future teacher recalled an experience in the third grade. She was sitting at the end of the row, in the back of the room, her legs dangling from a too-high seat. She was trying to hear a lengthy reading by the teacher of some remote historical material—she didn't quite remember what. Bored because it just didn't seem to make sense, she started drawing on a piece of tissue paper that just happened to be handy. Abruptly, her peace of mind was shattered. "Nancy, you are writing. You are absolutely forbidden to write when I am reading. And you of all people. Come and stand in front of the room until I am all through." Nancy protested. She wasn't writing. She was not even using paper. It was tissue paper. But the teacher was indignant. Shrinking and half sick, Nancy stood, with her back to the class, beside the teacher's desk for an intolerable ten minutes. On entering teaching herself, Nancy resolved that no matter what happened in her class, she would never force a student to stand in front of a class as a method of punishment.

Other beginning teachers may recall similar incidents. It may be worth while to inquire, "How did I feel about this kind of treatment? Why was it that I remember it all so painfully and vividly even to this day? Was the teacher justified? Was the suffering I endured worth it in my more compliant behavior?"

The beginning teacher should also examine critically the kind of teacher management he admires. As was suggested in the Introduction, there are many kinds of good teachers, and each has his own methods of control. Some teachers establish formal and rather impersonal classroom behavior. Others are free and easy and there is much laughter in their classroom. The kinds of discipline techniques that we can successfully use depend in large measure upon our own personality resources, our normal attitude toward others, and our ideal of a classroom. Within such limits as our own personality imposes, there are some general principles for good discipline that can be applied.

Although keeping order is the traditional version of discipline, the better professional approach is to develop good motivation, good mental hygiene in the classroom. In other words, a teacher who does a good job of motivating students to do the tasks that have been outlined has good discipline; similarly, a teacher in whose classroom there is a friendly, relaxed atmosphere has good discipline.

Before proceeding with this discussion, let us return for a moment to the criteria for democratic education already presented in Chapter 5. Essentially, these criteria establish the methods of democratic control or, in the terminology of the educator, democratic discipline. Establishing a balance between freedom and security means that rules operate and are respected, but that the individual feels comfortable within the framework of the rules. The rules then are the disciplinary agent; the teacher merely helps students in their observation. But the student does all he can in self-discipline. This concept makes discipline something that is not for the benefit of the teacher, or even for the benefit of the student, but for the benefit of the group. The activity itself imposes its own discipline in the same way that the rules of a game of basketball impose a discipline on the team.

The conception outlined above, however, is not all there is to the subject of discipline. Several variables must be taken into account.

First, we have the problem of teacher personality, teacher reaction to the activities and behavior of immature students. *Second*, there is the problem of the teacher who lacks teaching and social skills; he is simply tactless, or awkward, or disorganized. These first two may be called *teacher-caused* discipline problems. *Third*, there is the problem of explosive or provocative personality relations among members of the class. Some students are dynamite only in combination with certain other students. Others, unaided, can agitate the whole class. *Fourth*, there are the problems that reside in the individual personality of certain students. With these students, disturbances in adjustment at home or school have left their mark, making it more than normally difficult for them to adjust to classroom demands. The latter two may be called *student-caused* discipline problems.

Teacher-Caused Discipline Problems

Discipline problems that arise from inadequacies in the teacher, from his own intolerance or lack of insight into youth, will respond only to critical self-analysis. The inevitable clashes of personality that occur when a random sample of individuals are forced to work together can usually be adjusted by a reasonable facing of the problem.

Inadequacies in the teacher may be subdivided into lack of social skill and lack of teaching skill. Let us list some causes of discipline problems under each:

Teachers display lack of social skill by

- Using sarcasm.
- Failing to answer reasonable questions.
- Being insensitive to special problems of students, such as stuttering.
- Being inconsistent: for example, telling a student who has come in late to ask his neighbor for

Teachers display lack of teaching skill by

- Conducting classes in a dull, monotonous way.
- Speaking in a rasping, irritating voice.
- Giving vague assignments.
- Giving assignments too difficult for students.
- Giving assignments too easy for students.

- help, then scolding him for talking.
- Being impolite and inconsiderate.
- Making personal remarks about students.
- Being unfair; having favorites.
- Making disparaging remarks about social groups in the community.
- Gossiping about students in public places.
- Proceeding with oral work when there is noise in or outside the class.
- Failing to give attention to light and heat conditions.
- Being confused about classroom routines, such as distribution of supplies.
- Being subject to student pressure at unpredictable times.
- Failing to make all learning steps clear.
- Giving tests on material not covered in class.
- Rewarding only one kind of aptitude.

Teacher Lacking in Both Social and Teaching Skill

We could probably continue listing many other specific faults under each heading. The narrative below gives an example of a teacher grossly lacking in both social and teaching skill. As we read it, we are tempted to say that this is too extreme to be real. Unfortunately, the actions are not uncommon; they do not always occur in one class hour, but the malpractices are there if we observe long enough. This illustration is a true record of a classroom observation!

It was a lazy, warm noon. The first bell had rung. Students began to collect around the locked door of Room 12. Mr. Brown arrived breathlessly about a moment before the last bell sounded. The students pushed into the room.

A locked door! Not a very hospitable beginning; besides, a group collecting around a door interferes with the orderly passage of other students, breeding rowdiness and confusion.

Mr. Brown stood by his desk, riffling through a disorderly mass of student papers in search of his grade book. He announced to the class, "While I am taking roll, I want you to fill out these registration cards." He passed out the cards.

Good order, even on the teacher's desk, is basic to good management. The time wasted looking for something is time when the class lacks direction and confusion begins.

No explanation of the cards? What are they for? Even routine forms should be explained to minimize confusion.

While he was doing so, two girls came hurrying in. "You're late, girls," he remarked. "But, Mr. Brown, we've already been here once. We just went down the hall for a drink of water."

"You're still late. Go to the office and get a pass."

Better to complete distributing the cards and then speak to the girls privately.

The two girls had no sooner gone than another girl opened the door, dropped her books with a clatter on the first desk, and then went out.

This kind of lack of respect for the classroom activity seems to be a prevailing note in Mr. Brown's room. He treats the students with a lack of consideration, and they respond in kind.

"Mr. Brown," came a voice from the back of the room, "do we fill these cards out in ink?" No answer. Mr. Brown was checking the roll book, but obviously had heard the remark. "Mr. Brown, pen or pencil?"

An expected reaction, due to lack of directions when the cards were passed out. There will always be students who do not know what to do, no matter how often a routine has been gone through.

"You know better than to ask such a question," Mr. Brown finally retorted angrily. "You always fill things out in ink."

Why should the teacher disregard a request for information? If it is a legitimate request, it deserves an answer. If it is an attempt to annoy, the best way to thwart such efforts is to treat them seriously. Certainly telling the student in an angry tone of voice that he ought to know better only makes the situation worse.

"But what if you don't have a pen?"

"Then use mine, or borrow one."

"Oh, I have one. I was just wondering what someone who didn't have one would do."

A snicker passed through the room. . . .

This is the result of disregard for students as human beings. The teacher fell into a very neat trap; now his control over the class is in serious jeopardy.

"I'm going to hand back your papers for yesterday," announced Mr. Brown. Immediately everyone began to talk. "You people be quiet."

What is wrong with the students' talking at this moment? Of course they are interested in exchanging reactions to this announcement—just as adults would be!

"Some of you are going to be sent to the office if you're not careful."

The use of threats should be carefully weighed. Is "the office" the place to settle minor difficulties? What kind of behavior merits such treatment?

Two girls kept right on talking.

Evidently this threat didn't work; the students continued to misbehave.

"Have you girls finished your conversation?"

This kind of question is bound to cause trouble.

"Yes," they answered, with a smirk to their neighbors.

What if the girls had answered "No"?

At this point, the three tardy students returned to class. Mr. Brown began to read the answers to the punctuation exercise. He

interrupted himself to ask, "Those of you who came in late, do you know what we are doing?"

"No."

Obviously the latecomers could not know what the lesson was, so why ask? The teacher might better have told them briefly what to do, or have asked them to wait and told them later, or have assigned a student to help them quietly.

"Well, find out." The students referred to immediately turned to their neighbors, and for a moment disrupted Mr. Brown's procedure.

He is asking for trouble. Of course, such a remark will only lead to a new source of distraction and confusion. And no one could possibly say that this time the students were at fault.

A discussion arose about one of the exercises. It had to do with the use of a semicolon for a comma. "I don't see what harm there is in using it," one student declared.

"Well, it's wrong, that's all," Mr. Brown said impatiently. "We can't spend much more time on this assignment," he continued, "so I'll hurry through the rest of the answers."

Is this an answer? This is not teaching in any sense of the word. If the subject is worthy of class time, it is worthy of some respect. The teacher by his own attitude is setting a bad example. The students cannot learn to appreciate appropriate speech habits if the teacher himself does not respect them.

While Mr. Brown was reading the rest of the answers, the students wandered up to the wastepaper basket and the pencil sharpener.

A class will show its lack of interest by making use of such disturbing actions as throwing away paper and sharpening pencils. Either interest the class in the activity or have rules about using these facilities so that class work is orderly.

"I'm going to read some of your themes," he announced next. Voices from the class called out, "Are you going to read the names?" "Please don't read the names."

"If they are good, I don't see why I shouldn't," was his reply. The class began to whisper complainingly. Mr. Brown started to read one of the themes. The whispering continued.

If themes are read aloud, the teacher should abide by the wishes of the class about use of names.

"You students will have to be quiet. You are old enough to know when you are being rude."

Mr. Brown is old enough to know that he has been even ruder himself. Students also have personal feelings.

He finished reading the first theme. The class broke into talking again. Several of the students asked questions. "If you want me to hear you, you'll have to talk one at a time; I can't hear you at all," he said sharply. He started to read another theme; the class continued to fuss and whisper. He looked up.

The class is completely disorganized. The teacher has lost the students' attention. He tells them he cannot hear them, but fails to re-establish some order in the room.

"What did you say, Joan?"

"Nothing."

"Talking to yourself?"

"Uh-huh."

Mr. Brown returned to his reading; Joan turned and smiled at the girl behind her. The class snickered. . . . Mercifully, the bell rang.

The teacher set his own trap. He deserved to be caught.

It is most significant that this teacher seemed unable to predict the consequences of his own actions. When asked why his class was so chaotic and disturbed, he seemed unable to do anything but blame the students. Yet a careful report of what went on shows clearly that he contributed most, if not all, of the incentive for the misbehavior.

Below is another example of a teacher whose discipline leaves much to be desired:

Mr. Green was organizing supplies in the adjoining room when the art class arrived. The class clustered in little groups and chattered about the election that was being held in the school. Mr. Green entered the room and, in a loud voice, said, "Everyone sit down and be quiet!" He read an announcement of a senior class meeting. The seniors bounced up and started to leave the room. In a stern voice, Mr. Green told them to return to their seats and asked for an assignment due that day. He checked the seniors out one at a time, picking up their assignments as they went out. He continued taking the class roll and checking the assignments. This task took from 9:30 until 9:45; the class, with nothing to do, was restless. There were several private conversations going on and six or seven students scrambled to their lockers to find the assignment due.

Mr. Green went into the other room to check out paper for the coming assignment. He prefaced this with a remark, "Just ask for the color and size of paper you need, no other questions." This distribution took from 9:45 to 10:05. He returned to the main room, called for order, and announced that the marks for overdue assignments would be lowered by one letter grade for each day they were late. There was time left to help three people individually out of the class of twenty. For most of the students, the hour had been spent in waiting and in various diversionary maneuvers.

The Mr. Brown of the first example was alternately rude and inept; Mr. Green tries to be stern and forbidding. But Mr. Green, like Mr. Brown, is having little success in motivating his students to learn. If asked why, Mr. Green would say that he had discipline problems; the students did not seem to be able to do their work as requested. This teacher obviously needs to examine some basic errors in his teaching methods when only three out of a class of twenty get any aid during a fifty-minute period.

Teacher Lacking in Teaching Skill

The daily routine—or daily monotony—consists of Mrs. Drew's reading the answers to the previous night's homework, recording the grades orally, and showing the correct answers to those problems with which the students had difficulty. After the problems have been corrected, either the new day's assignment or review is taken up. After about twenty minutes' discussion, time is given for working on the next day's assignment. As far as discipline is concerned, Mrs. Drew runs the class with an "iron hand." The only time that the

class is the least unruly is during study periods. And the one time the teacher went out of class, the following incidents occurred: (1) a boy stood up and shouted to a friend across the room; (2) two other boys threw paper wads at each other; (3) another boy made faces at a girl in the room; (4) three girls started combing their hair and putting on lipstick; (5) one girl hit another on the head with her book. As soon as the teacher returned, all was quiet.

This is discipline, with the teacher sitting on a volcano. When she leaves the room, the class explodes. The repressive attitude and the monotony lead to discipline problems. These problems are produced by the teacher through poor insight into what makes young people learn. In this example it is obvious that the teacher should overhaul her methods of instruction. Variety of experiences should be offered, use of student problem-solving groups introduced, direction of learning by students encouraged. Repression is accepted only for those moments when the repressive agent is present; the instant authority is withdrawn, the class erupts.

Here is another description of teacher-made discipline problems:

In the chemistry class everyone was talking so loudly that it was difficult to hear what Mr. Kern had to say. He tried to get order by saying, "There will be order in this room." He repeated this twice, but it seemed to have no effect. Conversations continued on such topics as the weekend date, the new hairdo, the football team. One of the boys in the class was overheard saying, "Gee, but this class is dull."

Two boys seemed to be the main discipline problems in the room. Mr. Kern tried to kid them and tease them along. He also pointed out that they had done some things wrong and that they should either do better or else not take the class. Almost everyone laughed or snickered. The boys enjoyed being the center of attention.

After the bell had rung, paper was passed out for a test. Questions were placed on the blackboard. The students were asked to write the chemical formulas for twenty compounds, the names of which were written out in longhand on the board. Mr. Kern said that fifteen to twenty minutes would be allotted for this. None of the members of the class looked very happy about the prospect of having a test. There was much cheating, which Mr. Kern either did not notice or ignored. At the end of twenty minutes, Mr. Kern asked how many had finished the test. Most of the class hadn't finished, so Mr. Kern allowed them about ten minutes more. Papers were then exchanged and corrected. Two members of the class scored above 35 points

out of 40 on the test. Five others made over 30 points, but the rest of the marks were low. Mr. Kern was very free in expressing his disappointment in the results to the class.

Here, it is evident, Mr. Kern's own lack of teaching skill produces his discipline problems. The class is dull. The teacher does nothing that commands attention. He plays up to students who obtain attention by misbehavior and so increases the incentive to further misbehavior. Finally, by springing a test on the students, he arouses student antagonism, and, since the class was evidently unprepared, he promotes and rewards cheating. What does the score on the test mean in this class?

Although a parade of horrible examples is not the whole story of discipline, a thoughtful analysis of these descriptions of teacher mismanagement will at least underline some mistakes *not* to make. In the following example, notice how Mr. Joy creates his own troubles:

Before the class had begun, Mr. Joy, in a very domineering voice, ordered John to fix a broken window shade. After a few minutes, John took his seat. Roll was then taken. This was a long, disorganized process, since the class was noisy and few were paying attention. Upon completing the roll call, Mr. Joy noticed that the shade was still not fixed to his satisfaction and again commanded John to fix it. All eyes were on John, and there was much amusement on the part of the other students. Finally, the shade was fixed. Mr. Joy thanked John curtly.

Mr. Joy then began to lecture, but few students were paying attention. Most were either working on tardy reports or doing other assignments. Mr. Joy rebuked Alice on two occasions. When Betty asked a question that was not directly related to the lecture, Mr. Joy spoke to her sharply. A few minutes later, he told Ann that if she did not close her book and pay attention, she could go to the library. Ann insisted that she was attentive and need not go to the library. By this time, Mr. Joy's harsh voice and sharp tongue had broken down the morale of the whole class.

The teacher deserved all the antagonism he felt in this class. His lack of routine in taking the roll is illustrative of the way in which he allows disorderliness to obscure real learning. He feels ill at ease; his harsh voice and sharp tongue show that he also is unhappy about his teaching.

The next example illustrates the effect of poor teaching on the

interrelations of students. Here we see a teacher who is insensitive to the kinds of relationships he is forcing on his students, with most serious consequences for all the boys involved:

After five minutes of calisthenics, the boys separated into pre-chosen touch football teams. The coach handed out the balls to the teams from a bag carried to the field. There were three or four domineering boys on each team. They monopolized all the playing while the other two or three boys on the team centered the ball or blocked—or did nothing. One big boy, who was wearing football shoes, called the plays and carried the ball in almost every play. The coach explained that the boy was a center on the varsity and that he allowed him to wear cleats when he didn't have his tennis shoes. On the same team, a small boy, wearing glasses, didn't even bother to get into the huddles. He centered the ball every time and just blocked.

The coach made the statement, "The postwar boys don't seem to have any spirit. None of them seems to be interested in learning to play games or learning fundamentals."

Of course the boys in this class do not play well; the teacher has failed to put them in situations where they will want to play.

Two other pitfalls for the unwary teacher should be mentioned here. One is falling prey to his own personal problems and anxieties. The teacher who is moody—sunny one day and a thundercloud the next—induces insecurity and anxiety in his students. Although we cannot always do so, it is wise to develop a habit of working in which personal problems are shut out as much as possible. Otherwise, student misbehavior may seem unbearable one day and highly humorous the next. This kind of inconsistency is bound to make trouble for the teacher. Students will distrust him and ignore his rules because he himself is unreliable about enforcing them.

The second pitfall is rudeness. Teachers often talk to students and treat them in a way they would permit no adult to treat them—calling them "dumb," complaining that they are acting like babies, making personal remarks about their appearance in public ("Well, Johnny looks as though he finally changed shirts today," or "Mary is trying to be a stand-in for color television with that hairdo"), hurrying them with impatience, and interrupting their conversations or reports in a brusque and unnecessary fashion. As one observer stated, "Watching children play school might well give us pause

Discourtesy, peremptory commands, scoldings, derogatory remarks, are embarrassingly common when they play the role of the teacher." We can be quite sure that a rude teacher will be treated rudely by his students.

Guides to Correcting Teacher-Caused Discipline Problems

What measures can be suggested in cases where discipline seems to be a result of the teacher's own mistakes in management? *First*, of course, it is imperative to make a critical analysis of those actions on the part of the teacher that cause trouble. Often, this analysis must be made by an outside observer. Teachers who bring about their own misfortunes may be unable to see just what it is they do that seems to be so provocative. The student-teaching period should be the time during which a beginning teacher is helped to see what actions of *his* contribute to a smoothly operating class, and which are disruptive. *Second*, the quality of instruction should be reviewed. Discipline problems sometimes arise not from anything the teacher does wrong but merely from the dullness of the class work. *Third*, visits to other classrooms, in which teachers are successful in discipline, may suggest better methods of management. For example, if starting the day is an acute problem for the teacher, he should try to learn how others handle this routine successfully.

The teacher who is the major cause of his own troubles has usually made mistakes early in teaching and has not gone back to analyze his errors. He merely continues to make the same mistakes, with the same unfortunate consequences. The skillful teacher says to himself, "Well, that lesson went well; now why did it work so much better in the third period than in the fourth period?" Or, "Why did Johnny look so angry at what I said? What problem in him did I touch?" A persistent self-consciousness about the process of teaching, an objective appraisal of instructional tactics, is essential to increased competence.

In discussing the contribution that the teacher makes to his own problems of discipline, one additional general principle must be clearly stated and emphasized. Teachers, like all other human beings, will react negatively to anyone who makes life more difficult for

them. It would require a kind of superman to react at once with loving kindness toward a sixteen-year-old who continually makes irritating remarks in class. The teacher might easily develop a healthy dislike for such a youngster. Under ordinary circumstances, if he were not a teacher, his attitude might not matter so much. But the teaching situation is not an ordinary circumstance, and the teacher is not justified in reacting as he would in a normal social situation. These young people are growing up—a process that is difficult, if not downright hazardous, in this complicated world of ours. The teacher is one among several special adults who has the peculiar responsibility of helping them grow up in a pattern best suited to their own growth needs. Dislike is a strong impediment to providing such help. Yet the students who need help most are almost always those who are most trying.

The teacher, then, must be emotionally prepared for this *first* reaction of dislike toward those students who are making trouble, and, by seeing his reaction as a normal occurrence, try to view the behavior objectively. To the best of his ability, the teacher should consider the student not as one making trouble for the teacher, but as one who, by his misbehavior, makes trouble for himself. Such a student needs more help, more kindness, more consideration because his progress toward maturity is so much more difficult.

The teacher's role in discipline, then, is to recognize and practice the ordinary amenities of social living, to teach with skill, and to develop insight into his own emotional rejection of students who create trouble. With such preparation, the teacher is ready to examine carefully the contributions young people themselves make to classroom disturbances.

Student-Caused Discipline Problems

In the preceding section of this chapter we have discussed those discipline situations that arise primarily because the teacher has neglected some vital phase of classroom management. In this section, and in the succeeding chapter, we will be concerned with those discipline situations that arise from the students' efforts to adjust to

the world around them. Many of the acts that disturb orderly classroom learning are merely the result of adolescents acting like adolescents; others arise out of deep, unmet needs of individual personality.

An analysis of the kinds of misbehavior that particularly plague teachers and disrupt classrooms reveals four major categories whose primary cause can be said to lie with the students themselves. These are:

- Discipline situations arising from student-student interaction.
- Discipline situations arising from student reaction to school routines and institutional procedures.
- Discipline situations arising from immediate personality needs—"adolescents acting like adolescents."
- Discipline situations arising from long-term personality needs.

The first two categories will be discussed in the remainder of this chapter, and the second two will be considered in the following chapter.

Discipline Situations Arising from Student-Student Interaction

In an earlier section it was noted that a student could no more be expected to behave if seated day after day beside someone he detested than an adult could be expected to control his feelings in a similar situation. A discipline situation may also arise from the reaction of students to others they like very much. The kinds of problems for the teacher that arise in the area of student-student interaction are primarily the following:

- Continued and disturbing conversations.
- Passing of notes.
- One student's dependence on another for all his work.
- Hostility among students.
- Flirtations.
- Cheating.

Below are some typical examples.

1. While Mr. Gantner was talking, the conversation of two boys increased to a rather annoying degree. Mr. Gantner stopped and

asked, "What is it that you don't understand?" Since the attention of the class was directed toward them, one of the boys managed to ask a question pertinent to the subject. The conversation ceased.

2. Sherman and Gerald were seated one behind the other and were obviously close pals. The two had been assigned, as a joint task, the job of presenting an oral report to the class. Mr. Span asked Gerald to read to the class a portion of a set of printed regulations governing sanitation in restaurants. Gerald didn't reply at once, but his friend Sherman volunteered to do it instead. Mr. Span said that he wanted Gerald to read it. Gerald announced that he "guessed" that he had "left it home." Mr. Span told him to speak extemporaneously, telling the class whatever he could remember. Gerald did so. Actually, the printed matter was on his desk the whole time. Later, Mr. Span discovered that Gerald, a ninth-grade student, was for all practical purposes a "nonreader" and very self-conscious about it. His friend Sherman "carried him along," trying to do all his work for him.

3. John was talking to Bill while Miss Swan was discussing the day's work. Suddenly she stopped and asked John whether what he had to say was so important that he could afford to be rude to her. If so, Miss Swan said, she would stop and allow him to do the talking. John, with a sheepish smile, opened his book to the day's lesson.

4. A group of ninth-grade girls, including the daughters of two of the most influential families in the district, accused a group of four Spanish-American boys of saying very nasty things to them. The boys denied it. The leader of the group of girls insisted, and, since she had never been known to lie, the boys were reprimanded, deprived of participation in the baseball game, and restricted in their activities to a very small portion of the schoolyard. The next day one of the boys refused to come to school. The others were sulky and rebellious, especially toward the teacher. Mr. Bell, the principal, asked the truant officer to talk to them. That afternoon one girl came to Mr. Bell. She told him that the boys had really been speaking Spanish and had said nothing bad. The other girls had not understood and had given the words their own interpretation. Mr. Bell called the boys in and apologized.

5. On Tuesday, during a discussion period, Mr. Barr finally asked two students to stop talking. He did this without raising his voice; in fact, he never varied his voice from a rather monotonous low tone. During the two discussion periods during the week, the three overflow students who sat at one of the lab tables were always talking. Once Mr. Barr asked one of these students a question, in a low

voice, knowing that the student wouldn't hear him. In a moment the student said, "What was the question?" Mr. Barr said, "I thought you probably wouldn't hear." As an attempt to embarrass the student, it was unsuccessful. After he had tried to answer the question, the student soon began talking with his neighbor again.

Several interesting points emerge from these examples. How do good teachers handle students' conversations that are irrelevant to the work of the class? In the first example, the teacher assumed that obviously the students would not be talking together unless he, the teacher, had failed to make the instruction clear. But look at the last example. Here the teacher has no such confident expectation. On the contrary, he indicates by his weak voice and hopeless attitude that he really does not expect anyone to listen. This attitude should be contrasted with the assumption underlying the teacher's action in the third example. Here the teacher is using a kind of social blackmail to bring the student into line. After all, no gentleman would be rude, now, would he? This method may work, but not with any degree of reliability. The teacher is depending on the appeal to loyalty to herself, rather than on an objective need for quiet. Being quiet because the learning job demands quiet places the emphasis where it belongs.

The fourth example, the problem of the Spanish-speaking students, is common wherever a large segment of the school population speaks another language fluently. Teachers as well as students find this difficult, since it is impossible to know whether or not one is being insulted when one does not know the words! The discipline situations that arise out of this kind of situation often involve a total school program. Where the bilingual students are helped to feel at home, respected, accepted, the problems arise more rarely. But where they are subject to social ostracism and repressive rules about speaking their own language, there are bound to be occurrences similar to the one cited here.

CLASSROOM PROCEDURES

The examples above show both poor and good practices in relation to some of the typical disturbances created by student interaction. Let us briefly summarize the teacher's most effective tactics in dealing with them:

Continued and disturbing conversations:

Ignore the conversation if the rest of the class is absorbed in activity. The students who are talking may be drawn into the group activity eventually without a special reprimand.

Walk around the room, making it a point to stand near students who are more likely to talk than others. If a student report is going on, the teacher should quietly place himself wherever he foresees that some trouble may emerge. Thus he can inconspicuously exercise control.

Call the students for a special conference; discuss the problems they create with the class; ask them for a solution.

Discuss the problem with the whole class if the disturbance is sufficiently widespread. Ask the class to agree on how to behave, and to set up rules that should be observed. Have the rules posted if necessary. Thus the attention of offenders can be called to the rule they themselves made.

Study students who talk continually. Have they a special problem? They may be completely confused by the work. They may have missed class sessions or be beyond their intellectual depth. Or, they may have finished all their work and need extra assignments. Some talkers are exhibitionists and need to learn how to control this bid for attention. These are best handled by giving them ample opportunity to talk before the class, not by stifling them.

Separating friends who seem to encourage each other to misbehave works no miracles! Instead of giggling together in the middle of the room, they may communicate across the whole breadth or length of the room and inconvenience that many more students. It is wiser to discuss the matter with the offenders, helping them see the benefits of being allowed to stay together and the possible penalty of separation if they refuse to do some self-disciplining.

Passing of notes:

Introduce a greater variety of activity into the classroom. Like any other student-student disturbance, note-passing is often a symptom of class work that is boring and lacks challenge. The main problem then is not the note.

Never read a note aloud to a class; it may be highly embarrassing to you.

Overdependence of one student on another (see example 2 on page 425):

Leave a dependent friendship of this sort alone until a more desirable substitute is ready. The students usually need each other and should not be deprived of help until better relationships with others can be built. Give them joint projects; use group methods to wean them slowly away from each other if it seems desirable. Find some skill on the part of the dependent student and encourage him to develop it.

Hostility between two or more students or between groups of students:

Talk with the hostile students individually. Such a situation needs careful diagnosis rather than immediate action. It is far better to get at the roots of the hostility than to suppress it for a short time, when it may emerge later in more exaggerated form.

Flirtations:

Do not try to meet the problem head-on. A person intent on attracting the attention of the opposite sex will do so whether permitted or not. The problem is best met by permitting more, rather than less, socialization, so that students can become acquainted without having to disrupt the class to do so. Then, if the problem continues, the teacher has a firm basis upon which to discuss the actions with the offending person.

Avoid any public issue. Students will be quick to laugh at the teacher who tries to shame students into ceasing flirtations. The teacher will only gain the reputation of being stodgy and will have made his problem worse.

Cheating:

Reorganize test or assignment structure. Cheating occurs when the teacher has made it impossible for the students either to learn the right answers or to achieve good grades by acceptable means (see example on page 419; also the discussion of cheating in Chapter 17.)

Discuss the problem of cheating with the class. Examine the consequences of cheating and suggest that the class think through the problem.

Lift pressure off individuals who consistently cheat. Provide such students with other ways of gaining recognition for achievement.

Provide opportunity to do poor work over; then students will not be forced to cheat in order to make good on the one chance provided.

Discuss cooperative learning and how students can help each other learn without being guilty of cheating.

In order to end the discussion on a positive note, here are some descriptions of teachers managing with varying degrees of adequacy some of the kinds of problem behavior discussed in this section:

At the start of class Mr. Rung began discussion of new work while drawing a figure on the board. His manner was one of continuing a conversation that had been interrupted some time previously. One boy in the back of the room was moving about, trying to borrow a pencil from someone. A couple were exchanging notes. Mr. Rung, however, gave the activity no apparent notice, and in a few minutes the class's attention was on the new work being discussed. A little later, the interest of a couple of boys in the front of the room waned, and they began some extended whispering. This was quashed when Mr. Rung quietly spoke their names, in a simple declarative manner, with no admonishment.

During the study period following the lesson there was low talking among groups, some sitting two in a seat while discussing the work. The instructor moved about the room, helping various individuals. If a problem-working conversation became too noisy or wandered to irrelevant topics, Mr. Rung would walk by. The noisy one would ask a question, but would then subside to more serious work.

Just as soon as Mr. MacDonald sensed restlessness, even before it was really noticeable, he would say with good humor, "What's the matter, John?" "Did you have a question, Cornell?" "I wonder if I've made that clear, George." His tone of voice was never accusing or threatening; it was simply matter-of-fact. On one occasion he asked Bill to step outside so he could talk to him. When the boy returned, he was not belligerent or beaten down; rather, he showed that he accepted the whole incident. Mr. MacDonald apparently felt that Bill would be causing trouble all during class if he were not quieted down immediately. All such situations were treated as incidents rather than issues.

One morning, while a student was reading the daily bulletin to the class, there was considerable talking and unnecessary noisemaking. Mrs. Jerome said nothing until the student had finished reading. Then she explained to the class that they hadn't been fair to those who were interested in what had been said or to the person who was.

reading. In this way she tried to promote self-discipline among the group members instead of instilling fear of punishment.

Discipline Situations Arising from School Life

Some discipline problems arise from students' all-to-human reaction to the institutional arrangements of our schools. The crucial school situations that seem to make it more than usually difficult for students to control themselves are:

The last period of the day on Friday.

The last period of the day, usually.

The last five minutes of the class just before lunch.

The whole day just before a big game, rally, all-school festival.

The first part of the period following an exciting rally, school assembly, fire drill.

The day just before report cards come out; the day report cards are issued; the day following.

At a time of all-school crisis, such as winning the league championship, conflict between students and administration, arrest of students and consequent school scandal, death of a popular student.

Before a holiday and before extended vacations.

The first few days of school.

Fridays in general; sometimes the first half of Monday.

Appearance of a substitute.

The first few minutes of the period.

This list could probably be extended from the experience of every teacher.

How are students likely to respond to such situations? The major symptom is a general restlessness, which communicates itself to all of the class: wriggling, giggling, squirming, inattention, inability to stop whispered conversations, short attention span, unexpected bursts of laughter at minor episodes, unusually loud voices—a kind of minor mass hysteria. After all, the students are part of group, and group feelings are likely to pervade the classroom. A class can be happy, sullen, gay, silly, excited, voluble, antagonistic, just as a person can. This means that most of the students will react similarly; faces will hold the same kind of look.

CLASSROOM PROCEDURES

In meeting discipline situations arising from student reaction to school life, the teacher's approach should be one of dealing with the group as a whole. The following courses of action are suggested:

Accept the feelings of the class. The wise teacher recognizes the contagion of restlessness or tension. He does not consider this a personal affront. He does not become aggressive, knowing aggression from him will only bring retaliative aggression from his class. If he gets angry, the class will get angry in turn. Nor does he become worried and let the class observe his insecurity. He may note, with the kind of good humor most natural to him, the temper of the class. He may say, "You know, this spring weather makes me restless, too, so I've planned an hour especially to take care of all this spare energy I see you have." Or, "Anybody here ever study atomic energy? Have trouble understanding it? Well, here's your chance to study it first hand. There's enough nuclear energy around here today. We ought to put it to work."

Provide an activity in keeping with the class atmosphere. If the reactions of the class are very different from the usual ones, the teacher should not expect to carry on regular class activities. Even if another kind of activity has been scheduled, it is sometimes wiser, when a class is really restless, to propose instead some active, interesting, and attention-getting device: a drill game (see Chapter 11), group quiz, or some other type of short-term group activity (see Chapter 10), or general class discussion of a controversial topic of interest. All of these approaches help to utilize the steam generated in the students.

Avoid using repressive or anxiety-producing devices. Some teachers have been known to spring a test on a class when it gets unruly. As a result, the teacher finds the class antagonistic and hostile. His future attempts to win students will be handicapped.

Do not give an assignment the night before a big game, or for the evening of the day when some major school activity is scheduled. The battles over assignments are cruel enough without provoking worse trouble. One teacher who failed to observe this principle was in periodic conflict with his class over delinquent homework. He seemed to go out of his way to give students lengthy themes on the nights of the league basketball games. Needless to say, he received few themes the next day.

Discuss the problem with the class. The teacher who recognizes the feelings of the class and then says, "Well, we feel restless today; but work must go on. There are a number of important things to get done in class; how should we go about doing them so that our high spirits don't get in the way?" will do much to establish rapport with his students. Talking things over also permits students to gain an objective view of their own behavior and enables them to modify it toward more compliant patterns.

SUMMARY

In this chapter we have discussed several kinds of discipline problems. In one kind, the teacher may contribute to his own problems of classroom control through lack of skill in human relations or through lack of teaching skill. A careful diagnosis by the teacher of his contribution to a discipline situation will often improve classroom atmosphere. Of course, we must avoid the blunder of assigning exclusive blame for discipline problems to either the teacher or the students; usually, the responsibility is shared. What is important is to make a sensitive diagnosis of any continued discipline problem, to know what the source might be, and then to take appropriate action. Too often, in such a diagnosis, the teacher will blame the students; it has been our purpose here to point out the large role played by the teacher himself.

Students, however, do not all adjust equally well to the situations created by the school. Some of them find it difficult to exercise as much self-discipline as group learning demands. Discipline problems arise from the interaction of student with student and include such things as note-passing, continued and disturbing conversations, cheating. Difficulties may also develop in student adjustment to various aspects of school life, to the demands of the school as an institution. In this category are included students' usual responses to the last period of the day on Friday, the day before a big game, the day just before or after a holiday or extended vacation, and similar situations.

In dealing with these discipline problems, we recognize that

there is no easy solution. However, the teacher who gains insight into, and understanding of, the adolescent personality, who himself is sensitive to the school as an institution, will be able to accept young people and guide them in more adequate ways of adjusting to the many conflicting pressures of the school world and the world of their peers.

Adjustment to School Life: Discipline II

THE HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER must live with an average of over one hundred students a day. For the sake of sheer self-preservation, an atmosphere of relaxation, interest, and quiet order must prevail. But adolescents have many life experiences to explore, understand, and absorb. These pressures, social and personal, make it difficult for many students to accept gracefully the numerous demands of the school and to perform the tasks of learning in compliant and interested fashion. In this chapter, we will discuss the problems that arise out of students' adjustment as adolescents in our culture as well as those problems that arise from the deeper personality needs of individuals.

Finally, we will consider the over-all problem of discipline in terms of a philosophy of discipline. We will suggest that teachers assess any line of action purported to create an orderly learning situation in terms of the long-range as well as the short-range effects on the human being involved. We believe it important to establish a

frame of reference that will enable teachers to distinguish effective, mature, constructive, democratic discipline from repressive, punitive, and destructive procedures.

Discipline Situations Arising from Immediate Personality Needs

Some discipline situations arise primarily because adolescents are adolescents. It is important to distinguish these normal manifestations of misbehavior from the deeper personality problems and disorders that will be dealt with in the next section. How do you know whether student misbehavior is merely surface reaction or goes deeper? Roger Barker¹ has suggested a way of distinguishing the two. The surface misbehavior *can* be disciplined. That is, the surface act of aggression, as an expression of ordinary adolescent reaction to adult authority, can be dealt with by a firm tone, a brief nod, or by being ignored. The student relinquishes the misbehavior easily when the adult toward whom it is directed acts reasonably and confidently. But discipline problems that arise because adolescents are genuinely troubled, either by basic maladjustment in their whole personality structure or because they must endure impossible home situations, have the following characteristics:

They persist; they do not respond to normal teacher control.

They are manifest in many kinds of unruly actions.

There seems to be no logical connection between one misbehavior and another.

A schematic representation may make the distinction clear. If we conceive of the personality as made up of layers of reaction systems, we may think of superficial misbehavior as coming from the periphery of the personality. Deep behavior problems come from the central core of the personality. Both may have similar manifestations, but, as stated above, the surface problem can be handled by normal teacher control; the deep one cannot.

¹ Roger Barker, Lecture on Discipline (Unpublished, University of Kansas: Department of Psychology, August 1950).

The kinds of superficial misbehavior that concern us here are the following:

Failure to do homework or assignment.

Refusal to obey a teacher request.

Impudence.

Student-provoked "accidents" and other minor misbehaviors.

Skillful handling of disciplinary problems such as these is a major factor in teacher success.

Failure to Do Assignments

The basic problem in handling any of the situations listed above is, of course, the attitude of the teacher toward what appears to be a breach of discipline. If we view failure to do an assignment as a personal affront, then punishment is the only recourse. On the other hand, if failure to do an assignment is a problem that concerns both the teacher and the student, then it is open to mutual discussion. Why do students fail to do assignments?

Assignments unclear. This is the teacher's fault, and the student is not to be blamed.

Assignments too difficult for this student. Having one-level assignments for all students will almost always result in failure on the part of the slower students to do the work. After all, none of us likes to spend hour after hour struggling with material we do not understand or on which we will be given a failing grade even if we try to do it.

Assignments demanding facilities unavailable to the student. Sometimes teachers require viewing a television program as homework. Yet, is it always possible for every student to do this? What if an overbearing parent refuses to give up his program on the one television set in the house so that Susan can do her homework? Or what if the student works every hour after school and has no free time for homework?

Assignments basically uninteresting, boring, lacking in genuine intellectual challenge to the lively adolescent mind. The world of the young person is a very exciting one. If the teacher consistently ignores this fact and asks students to prepare assignments that are

petty, trivial, detailed, and remote from any relation to real life problems, there will be a constant problem of forcing students to do the assignments.

Apathy, laziness, lack of interest in the task at hand. It would be foolish to deny that our classrooms enroll many students who are personally lacking in discipline to do a hard task. School is a way of marking time for them. Grades are not very meaningful. The appeal by the teacher never evokes a response, except of indifference or irritation. Often such students cannot be prodded to perform, no matter what the teacher does. Sometimes, however, this is a period of growth. A student may demonstrate such behavior one semester and show a quite different attitude the following semester.

A demonstration of rebellion against the authority of the teacher or of the school or of both. The failure to do an assignment may very well be a refusal to do it. It might be considered a manifestation of the pattern of adolescent revolt that seems typical of our culture. The specific teacher might appear to bear the brunt of this revolt, but probably he is merely a symbol of all authority against which the student is rebelling as he seeks to attain independence and maturity.

CLASSROOM PROCEDURES

In dealing with failure to do assignments, the teacher will want to check his own teaching practices (see section on assignments, Chapter 6), then advance to other causes. When failure to do an assignment is due to these other causes, the best policy is to deal with the problem on an individual basis. Talking with the student about the situation may help. It is important, however, to use an approach such as this: "When you failed to hand in your assignment, John, I wondered whether there wasn't something we could do about it. What do you think?" Not: "John, you didn't hand in your assignment; I won't take any excuses. Now, what reasons do you have for this kind of behavior?" The latter approach puts the student on the defensive; the first implies that there is a problem of mutual concern to teacher and student.

Since the area of assignments is one of the major battlegrounds between teacher and student, it may be well to cite a few important strategic errors to avoid:

Do not go around the class demanding a public explanation from each student who failed to do his assignment. You will get one. The class clown or his cousin will very quickly rise to the occasion and make a wisecrack that will set the class laughing—at the teacher.

Do not argue with one student in front of the entire class regarding what he did or did not do on an assignment. If it appears that a student is going to start an argument, the teacher should immediately divert the discussion: "Well, Joe, perhaps we had better discuss this later, when it won't take time away from the rest of the class. Now . . ." and continue with a comment directing the attention of the class to the work ahead.

Do not let failure to do assignments continue without any word from you. The student may need help. Do not assume that the whole process of self-discipline has been fully learned by every class member. Many need support, specific study aid, and basic understanding to get them further along the road to maturity. The busy teacher who says, "Well, if they don't get their assignments in, let them suffer the consequences at the end of the semester," is doing a grave disservice to the students and building trouble for himself besides.

Do not forget the obligation implicit in giving an assignment. Giving an assignment and then forgetting to collect it, failing to return it, or returning it late are all evidences of poor teaching. Students will not do assignments in such an atmosphere.

Whenever the teacher deals with superficial misbehavior, he should keep in mind this cardinal principle: *Never construe student misbehavior as a personal attack.* As soon as the teacher does feel that student misbehavior, of whatever sort, is an affront to his own personality and authority, he cannot react effectively. We will continue to emphasize this basic principle in connection with other discipline situations that arise from the periphery of the student's personality.

Refusal to Obey a Teacher Request

Here is a typical dilemma:

Mrs. Jerome was conducting an oral reading period. In a friendly manner, she asked Phillip to read, just as she had asked others to

read. He refused. The first time this happened she passed over it and went on to another student. "But," she asked her neighbor down the hall, "what shall I do the next time it happens?"

The teacher has several ways of dealing with a situation like this. For example:

Never call on the student again for that activity. The student may never learn how to read orally, but he is also prevented from making a real issue out of it with the teacher.

Give him an "F," tell him so, and continue to call on him when it is his turn.

Insist that he do his task as the other students have done theirs.

Wait until it happens again. If it does, accept his refusal. Then check his cumulative record, talk to other teachers, and finally ask him to talk with you about his school work.

It should be obvious that the fourth course of action is most likely to produce some workable solution. The third solution is an invitation to trouble far more dangerous than any of the others. The student can continue to refuse. Then what?

CLASSROOM PROCEDURES

Gladys, in the back of the room, was fussing with the window-shade cord. The sound went click-click-click. The teacher was holding a discussion with the class, but the background rattle of the shade began to distract her and the students also. Finally, she said, "Gladys, please stop playing with the shade cord; it distracts us," and continued the discussion. Her tone was firm, pleasant, but insistent. Gladys stopped—for five minutes. Then, click-click-click. Was this rebellion? Was this open flaunting of the teacher's authority? It could be. But the teacher refused to act as though it were. Instead, she said, "Gladys, we haven't heard from you on this issue. Those shade cords are very tempting. How about moving just for today to this seat here, and we will want to call on you soon for your reactions." Gladys moved.

This appeal was hard to resist. But it didn't happen by magic. The teacher had established an atmosphere of regard for others, of response to her politely worded requests given in a firm, clear, unequivocal tone of voice. She didn't pursue the point but returned to the task at hand, making clear by her attitude that of course the student would respond to a reasonable request. *This expectation*

of reasonable behavior, of good behavior, is a potent tool in the hand of the teacher. It is particularly effective in dealing with incipient refusal to comply with a teacher request. But this expectation can exist only if the teacher has made the basic assumption that the student is not really trying to harass him, but is revolting against a symbol of adult authority.

But let us examine the refusal-to-obey further. Could the student possibly have had a good reason to refuse in the first example given on page 438? Sometimes, in situations such as oral reading, a boy may have deep reactions of stage fright, or he may be struggling to control a stutter or stammer, or his voice may be changing and be unreliable in pitch. A girl may feel ill or be ashamed of a cheap dress. Refusal may be reasonable and understandable. It is only the consistent or aggressive refusal that warrants action by the teacher. If the teacher follows up a refusal to obey and finds that a student has a reason that is, at least from his point of view, valid, the teacher can express interest or concern or admit that he didn't realize a problem existed. A bond is established with a student when he is made to realize that the teacher considers personal problems more important than unquestioning conformity.

Should the teacher ever force the issue, insisting that the student obey? We should recognize this situation for what it is—a struggle for power, student against teacher. The teacher feels he must win in order to assure any kind of future authority over the class. A public showdown between two personalities can be highly embarrassing for the teacher; often results in the defeat of the teacher; and rarely, even if the teacher “wins,” helps relationships in the classroom. Showdowns, when necessary, should always be conducted in private. To test the limits of authority, to see how far he can push the authority that surrounds him without getting stopped, is a genuine emotional need for some individuals, particularly young children. They try to find out just how far they can go before mama or daddy rises in wrath. Similarly, some immature adolescents (and some adults) who have found the authorities in their world somewhat unreliable and inconsistent will continue to try out the limits of any authority situation. They will see just how long they can continue aggressive or annoying behavior. The refusal to obey is one such manifestation.

The teacher who understands this need to defy authority re-

sponds to it by saying, in effect, "Jane, you seem to want to find out how much you can get away with in this class before I will get angry. Well, I don't think that will solve anything. But I suggest that we might talk together later about how I, and the rest of the class, expect you to behave as a member of our group." And the teacher then proceeds to attend to the problem of the rest of the class. Shortly thereafter, a follow-up interview will be needed (see Chapter 19). But the follow-up should take place only after sufficient time has elapsed for the emotional reactions to have passed; then both teacher and student can calmly consider the roots of the rebellion.

Impudence

A parent who had visited a school recently made the following observation.

The trouble with our modern schools is that the kids are just too fresh. Why, I heard a student whistle when Miss Green walked by. Another one saw me, waved his hand, and called out, "Hi, Mr. Jenkins," right in the middle of class. These kids are learning disrespect of adult authority; we need more discipline in our schools.

Parents of teen-agers are very vulnerable to adolescent attack. They particularly resent their own inability to make the child cease this kind of unpleasant behavior. Therefore, it is quite common to hear parents call upon the school to do the job of discipline or complain that if the schools had only done a decent job, the young people would not be as they are. It is true that in homes where a good working relationship exists between all members of the family, the impudent remark is rare; whereas in a home in which there is tension and uncertain authority, young people react to lack of security by being impudent.

Some typical classroom situations are given here:

1. Attention was excellent during discussion of four questions. After Mr. Rose caused the wisecracker who said that December 20, 1860, was "five days before Christmas" to be expelled from the room, class paid attention in docile manner.

2. During a question period, one of the students asked a foolish question, which was accompanied by the sudden flash of giggling. This attempt at impudence was nipped in the bud by Miss Arto,

who simply said, "Bob knows that is a silly question, so I won't bother to answer it." With this phrase, Bob was halted, and the class returned to the discussion.

3. A boy in the class gave an impression of insolence in his replies to Mr. Basle's questions. Mr. Basle pointed him out to me: "Now take that student. He looks like a troublemaker but is really a good student who can do good work and usually does. His surface attitude isn't very encouraging; but if handled right, he works hard. It's very important to avoid starting off on the wrong foot with him."

These examples are arranged in a sequence from an extreme, arbitrary reaction to an understanding, reasonable, and successful reaction.

When is the teacher justified in expelling a student? It is highly probable that the teacher in the first example above was reacting too severely. The remark was clever, not *necessarily* impudent. The teacher turned the remark into an attack upon himself. Perhaps the class remained docile, but it was coerced by fear of arbitrary punishment. Are these students learning anything about self-discipline? Are they learning to like the subject of the course? Are they developing attitudes of regard for the wisdom of adults?

Let us look at the second example. Here the teacher meets the attack head on. She feels that the question is foolish; she suspects that the student knows it; she makes it clear that she is not taken in by it. The tone of voice used by the teacher is the vital factor in the success of this procedure. Unfortunately, it is often a tone heavily loaded with sarcasm, dislike, irritation, or anger. In this example the statement that the teacher "won't be bothered" gives a somewhat faulty emphasis. It is the *class* whose time should not be taken to discuss a foolish question. The teacher might more wisely say, "Bob, that seems like a foolish question, and we are busy now discussing the really important parts of our topic today."

It is important to remember that the teacher's initial judgment of a question as foolish may be erroneous. The student may genuinely be seeking a point of information. Therefore, the teacher should be careful to leave a loophole for the student to rephrase his question; or, if the class reaction differs from that of the teacher, he should quickly assess this by a glance around the room and retract the hasty judgment. He might say, "Well, I can see by your faces

that this question is in your minds also. I didn't think it was a serious question, but apparently I was wrong. Now, Joe, What do you think the answer to Bob's question might be?"

The third example speaks for itself. Here is a teacher recognizing the need of some students to test the limits. This teacher sees that if he, the teacher, can react to the real need of the student and not feel that as a teacher he must be dominant in every relationship, he will be helping the student to outgrow his urge to attack authority.

CLASSROOM PROCEDURES

Nevertheless, it is clear that no teacher can stand for consistent "fresh" behavior—the insulting, stage-whisper wisecrack; the insolent retort; the deliberate use of vulgar or near-obscene language; the provocative, needling question. Sometimes this behavior takes the form of deliberately baiting the teacher. Youngsters try out on teachers the same devices that, unfortunately, work on parents. These are, typically, contrasting one teacher's methods with another, with a clear implication that one is less successful; drawing a teacher into a futile "'tis-'taint" debate or "Yes, I did—no, you didn't" dispute; arguing a point of behavior in front of the class. The student usually gets the better of this kind of argument, since in such a classroom climate the longer he can keep the teacher arguing and away from work, the more his fellow students approve. When the teacher senses impudence either in an individual or in a group of students, he should go through some searching self-examination to detect his own contribution to the situation:

Do I expect insulting behavior?

Do I respond violently to any sign of attack?

Do I lose my sense of humor as soon as I suspect a student is being fresh?

Am I inconsistent in my relations with the class—happy one day and tired or harsh or chaotic the next?

Do I react to the slightest move on the part of a very few students? Are these students who are not in my cultural group; that is, are on a lower socioeconomic level, of a different racial group, of a different ethnic group?

Am I easy to bait? Do I get taken in by a student inquiry and

descend to an argument with one student while the rest of the class listens with delight to teacher being "taken"?

If the teacher concludes, after a searching self-inquiry, that a real behavior problem exists in the students themselves, the next step is to find which individuals in the class seem to be responsible for most of this type of trouble. An examination of office records and a comparison with other teachers' experiences may give the teacher some explanation of the behavior of these students. Armed with some prior knowledge, he can provide special recognition—a special leadership role, significant class responsibility—for the students who are most prone to impudence. Then individual conferences should follow. The teacher's role in these conferences should be primarily to help the student recognize those feelings about himself and about school which give rise to these outbursts.

Student-Provoked "Accidents" and Other Minor Misbehaviors

Adolescents have an undeniable fondness for the unexpected. These "accidents" illustrate familiar minor behavior problems:

One day there was a slight disturbance when Jack almost fell into the aisle because his chair back had given way. The students near him laughed a little. He blushed and giggled. Mr. Abrams looked at him and smiled. The rest of the class didn't notice what had happened at all.

This was a commercial subject and intended primarily for girls. Of the boys who did enroll, most were there because they thought it was an easy course. This was especially true of the one senior in the class. "Red" seemed to be the ringleader in devising practical jokes. One day he kicked the chair out from under Jeff, who was sitting with his chair tilted back. Mr. Roamer asked Red whether he was the one who had kicked the chair. But before Red could answer, Jeff said that he had merely slipped. Mr. Roamer gave Red a look that implied he knew differently. The class continued its work.

Silence had descended on the room. Heads were bowed over test papers, pencils busily scraping over the desks. Each student was a model of concentration. "Ah-ah-ah-ah-choo!" came from the middle

of the room. Everyone looked up, startled. A flurry of giggling passed through the class. Miss Henrich stalked up to Dave and snatched his paper from him. "That was completely unnecessary, young man," she snapped. "Next time you have to sneeze, be polite enough to use a handkerchief. The rest of you get back to your test. Dave, you see me after school." Angry, annoyed, and puzzled looks could be observed on the faces of the students.

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A sense of humor, an ability to keep from overreacting, and an expectation of compliance with a reasonable request are the major requirements for meeting these so-called accidents. For accidents will happen; sometimes just to break the monotony, sometimes out of adolescent deviltry, but often because a book really is too near the edge of the desk, or a chair leg does collapse from overwork, or Susy really does have the hiccups. At any rate, the troublemakers should not be singled out for front-row seats. Teachers sometimes believe that these prominent positions inhibit misbehavior. This is rarely the case. Instead, such students now have the whole class behind them to observe their pranks. Incidentally, when teachers talk in front of a group, note where their eyes fall—not on those in the front row, but rather on the individuals in the middle seats in the middle rows.

Sometimes students substitute bizarre and startling behavior for accidents. Here is a typical incident:

Miss Laro was correcting sentences on the chalkboard. She had her back turned, and just as she turned to the class she saw John, who was sitting next to the side board, write someone else's name plus a nickname under his own work. When she came to John's work, she said nothing but drew a line through the fake name.

When incidents such as these occur, the teacher should ask himself, "Is this important enough to disturb the process of learning?" Sometimes teachers take so much time in conflict with students over minor disturbances that little time is left for creating a good learning atmosphere. It is often wisest not to see the petty disturbances. An isolated expression of adolescent exuberance is not a sign of poor discipline and should not be treated as such. However, if the disturbance is likely to disrupt the class continually, or is a symptom of a need on the part of the student to attract attention and gain

recognition, the teacher must prepare to deal with it in the same way as was suggested for impudent behavior.

To close this section, we include two incidents in which students were given permission to leave the room but returned late.

Grace asked permission, just before the start of the class, to go to her locker. Mrs. Hope allowed her this privilege, and she departed. Some fifteen minutes later she re-entered the room, somewhat hesitantly, to be greeted with these words: "Pardon me, Grace, but just where is your locker? Is it in this building?" The young lady flushed and took her seat amid considerable laughter, much of it coming from the left rear corner of the room, where the boys clustered.

Every day at 2:30 for a week, Tom, one of the older boys in the class, asked for a rest-room excuse. On Friday, when Tom asked at the usual time, Mr. Ruml kidded him and told him that this appeared to be quite a habit. Tom was slightly embarrassed. He did not ask for permission to leave in the days that followed.

The technique of public humiliation used in the first example is very unwise. The best procedure would be to ignore the late return, to treat it as though it had never happened, but to make a point of talking with the girl in private later. At that time, without an audience, the teacher might tactfully suggest that such a prolonged absence should be explained, although she personally is sure Grace must have had a very good reason. The teacher expresses, here, the assumption that the student's motives are acceptable. This kind of assumption is the quickest route toward obtaining acceptable behavior. Suspicion on the part of the teacher breeds distrust and defiance on the part of the student.

Now let us look at the second example. Here the teacher is again treading on delicate ground. The school health records can be consulted to see whether they offer any clue, but even if none is discovered, the teacher should be wary of direct attack. The teacher, not the student, may be in the wrong. The teacher might say, in a private conversation, "John, I've noticed that you ask for a pass every day at about this hour. It's all right, since I know you wouldn't just try to get out of class this way. But I wonder whether you mightn't check with the school doctor if this continues." And then follow this

up with a note to the school health department regarding your suggestion.

Special Problems for Men and Women Teachers

The types of student misbehavior considered in this section are undoubtedly familiar. So many of us, in our school careers, have indulged in just such antics to—provoke? irritate? attract?—the teacher. In addition, there are some special hazards in the discipline area, depending on the sex of the teacher:

Special problems for men teachers: At least once a year a man teacher will find that some girl tries to get out of doing the work, to escape from a general application of the rules, by using what are called “feminine wiles.” These often involve coyness and pretentions of fragility and feminine incompetence. Another device that girls use on men teachers is “the weeps.” As one teacher remarked, “I’ll do almost anything for a student rather than have her weep; when I see the danger signals—shiny eyes, trembling lip, shaking voice—I just want to run; so I say ‘yes’ before I know it, and am committed to something unfair to the other students.” Of course, some students are perfectly sincere; and, since they are especially emotional during adolescence, tears come because of the stress of feeling. It is important to distinguish, however, between the genuine and the pretended emotion.

Special problems for women teachers: Women teachers sometimes feel handicapped because of their inability to use the implied threat of physical force to get the bigger boys to behave. Since many women teachers are actually shorter and slighter than the students they have in class, this fear is understandable. But the woman teacher should not use unfair, or psychologically false, disciplinary methods. It is possible for a woman who is a mere five feet tall and weighs all of 103 pounds to be just as poised, calm, reasonable, and firm as a teacher who is a former football star. Since few schools would tolerate a teacher who used physical force, it is obvious that force is no real threat to the students. Inner poise and an intelligent use of good educational practices are a woman teacher’s best safeguards. Such a teacher should not be susceptible to the flattery of the mature

boys in her classes. They will use many of the wiles of their sisters, but may be more subtle about it.

In summary, discipline problems arising from immediate student personality needs include:

Failure to do homework or assignment.

Refusal to obey a teacher request.

Impudent behavior.

Student-provoked "accidents" and other minor misbehaviors.

Under these headings fall the bulk of the so-called discipline problems. The teacher who hopes to deal adequately with such incidents—and they will occur in every class, no matter how competent the teacher is—should in general observe the following principles:

Remember that this kind of misbehavior is not a personal attack on the teacher. It is rather an expression of adolescent exuberance, immaturity, or revolt against adult and school authority.

Assume that students are capable of a reasonable response to a reasonable request. This is more likely to produce reasonable behavior than almost any other technique. This technique assumes that no student who is adjusting normally to his world really wants to misbehave all the time. It assumes also that the desire to be good, to be liked, to be accepted, is the most powerful force motivating student behavior.

Underreact rather than overreact to provocative situations. This will provide protection for both teacher and student. No teacher who is constantly involved in emotional flare-ups in his classes can long survive. Nor can students stand emotional attacks for very long and continue to learn and work productively. The sense of humor that recognizes that young people are often very, very funny—even when they don't mean to be—rescues many a teacher from the trap of overreacting.

Be discriminating in dealing with misbehavior. Not every breach of classroom regulations is worthy of teacher attention. Choose carefully those situations in which effective class control can be established over the individual. This will do more to build a general atmosphere of control than dealing severely with every little incident and putting a tight lid on everyone.

Remember that students are lively young people, not just names in a roll book. If the pressure is too great, they will explode. Pressure may come from insistence on self-control for too long a period or on too high a level, or from emphasis on academic success motivated by fear of failure. Misbehavior of students is fostered by repression.

Mete out punishment with care. This principle is discussed further at the end of this chapter. A severe punishment for a mild offense is not appreciated by students. Punishments that ignore students' life situations also are unacceptable (for example, asking students to stay after school when they may have dental appointments, a school bus to catch).

Discipline Situations Arising from the Central Core of the Student's Personality

In this section we will consider the problems presented by students whose adjustment to themselves and to their world has been so inadequate that they cannot behave as others do no matter how desperately they may wish to conform. These are students who are socially maladjusted and emotionally disturbed. Often they are not classroom discipline problems at all, but sometimes they are serious threats to good order.

First, of course, there is need for diagnosis. Using the results of tests of personal-social adjustment (see Chapter 19), the teacher may detect a future behavior problem before it arises. But other clues are available. To recapitulate the criteria listed on page 435, serious misbehaviors are those—

- That persist; that do not respond to normal teacher control;
- That are manifest in many kinds of unruly actions;
- That seem to have no logical connection between one misbehavior and another.

It is important to remember that students, like other people, have problems. These problems are not left at home when the student comes to school. He brings his troubles with him. And because he is not an adult, and consequently has less insight into his troubles, he

has fewer ways of dealing with the conditions that interfere with a normal, happy life and fewer controls over his emotions. He is more likely to express his troubles freely through his behavior—or, rather, misbehavior!

To a teacher, every student is a little like an iceberg—only about one ninth of his life is apparent; the other eight ninths are hidden from view. The unrevealed portion of the student's life—his personal history, his family constellation, the previous experiences of success or failure in school, his growth in heterosexual adjustment, his fears and anxieties about the future—may produce the classroom misbehavior.

The teacher should remember that there are a few definitely deviant personalities among the adolescents he teaches. These we term "neurotic," "psychotic," or "psychopathic" personalities. There are students to whom reality is so terrifying, so brutal, that escape is imperative; but in seeking to escape, the personality structure becomes distorted and abnormal. The ordinary things of life become major hazards, and a normal response to the demands of daily living becomes impossible. The behavior that the teacher observes is symptomatic: the behavior is not the problem; it is a symptom of something that is disturbing the student. For example, a student who lives in a world of dreams, of fantasy, who seems entirely unaware of what is going on and cares less, is demonstrating symptomatic behavior of a very serious sort. Another student, who seems to get violently ill before any examination, who turns pale with fright at having to answer a simple question, is also overreacting to a normal demand of life. The teacher is not a diagnostician; he is not trained to deal with neurotic symptoms. However, he should be sensitive to behavior that may be symptomatic of emotional illness. When suspect behavior is observed, the student should be referred to those trained to help him.

Other manifestations of personal maladjustment include the following:

Extreme aggression; destruction of books, fighting, breaking of property, lying.

Stealing.

Sexual offenses.

Extreme hostility to peers and adults; truancy.

Compulsive behavior; exaggerated fear or anxiety; tics; compulsive arm or leg or bodily movement; inability to sit still.

From this list it can be seen that some forms of maladjustment lead to behavior directed against others and against the rules of society; some are directed against the adolescent's own person. Many delinquents manifest these categories of behavior problems. Their delinquencies are only intensified by teachers who deal with their misbehavior as though the students were "bad," not as though they were in need of help. When students demonstrate such extreme forms of maladjustment, the teacher must have recourse to trained personnel—psychologists, psychiatrists, psychoanalysts, child guidance workers, social workers. These specialists are available to the teacher through the immediate school system, the county or state school system, or private and public agencies of the community.

What does the teacher do about such students in the classroom? The main object of the teacher's control of such individuals is to prevent the student from injuring others through his behavior and, as much as possible, to prevent him from further injuring himself. Rarely is it possible for the teacher to aid the adjustment of such a student in any fundamental way. He is beyond the help of anyone untrained in the field of psychotherapy. The teacher can only hope not to be one more burden to an already overburdened personality attempting to find a way of living in this world.

One aid that lies close at hand, perhaps more readily accessible than any other, is utilization of some of the concepts derived from group therapy.² The major emphasis in using the group to aid the individual is on establishing an atmosphere of acceptance and permissiveness. The teacher-leader is not a judge or parent substitute; rather, he becomes a stable, accepting, secure individual. The group interactions are the method by which the individual learns to compromise his own needs with those of others. In the high school classroom, full-scale group therapy is not usually available, although it is possible that one day the school's guidance program will include group therapy work. But through judicious use of group procedures (see Chapter 20), the individual teacher can make more progress in

² S. R. Slavson, *An Introduction to Group Therapy* (New York: Commonwealth Fund, 1943). See also S. R. Slavson, *Analytic Group Psychotherapy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1950).

dealing with seriously maladjusted students who create discipline problems than he can with almost any other teaching technique.

What Discipline Works?

Before concluding this section, we need to evaluate the various concepts of discipline and perhaps indicate the lines along which the beginning teacher may evolve a philosophy of discipline for himself.

"It may not be the kind of theory they teach you in college, but it works," is a standard comment of many teachers when they defend or describe their methods of obtaining classroom control. Such a comment expresses primarily the view that discipline is for the teacher's peace of mind. It succeeds because the students do what they are told within the four walls of the classroom. But is it successful in a larger sense? Discipline must be related to the purposes that we agree direct our total educational program. Considered in this light, *discipline really succeeds only when it contributes to the development of democratic individuals, enabling them to perform satisfactorily the various roles of worker, parent, and citizen.* The teacher who is primarily concerned about what works for him in achieving classroom control, "even if it doesn't agree with what is taught in the colleges," denies the larger aims to which our schools are committed.

Let us take some of the common measures that "work"—punishment, neglect, and emotional blackmail—and see why they negate the broader education goals. Then let us take one uncommon measure that "works"—democratic group control—and see why it affirms these goals.

Punishment

When does punishment work, and when does it not? Can a teacher punish freely? The typical punishments are increased assignments, poor grades, detention after school, dismissal from class, sending to higher disciplinary authority—or threats of all these. Is the effect of such punishments the creation of better student-teacher relations? From the point of view of the psychologist, punishment,

by and large, is a very ineffectual way of obtaining genuine compliance. According to Symonds,³ punishment merely serves—

- To increase anxiety, which spreads to many other situations;
- To produce hate of the one punishing and all he stands for;
- To induce counteraggression;
- To increase need for more and more punishment out of guilt for wrongdoing;
- To lower the student's self-esteem, making it increasingly difficult for him to feel that he is good enough to do anything that is good.

Olson states:

Most investigations demonstrate that well-considered praise or approval is superior to reproof in guiding learning. . . . Human studies suggest a greater desirability of reward and approval, partly because of the undesirable emotional involvement that accompanies punishment. Approval gives constructive direction to the nature of the behavior desired, rather than simply negative information about what is to be avoided.⁴

The case against punishment is very well established. Yet we find classroom after classroom dominated by a punitive atmosphere. Detention rooms are common, and individual teachers use many varieties of punishing techniques. Why are these used when they are psychologically unsound? First, because they relieve teachers' feelings of aggression. Second, because they are at hand; that is, they require little effort on the part of the teacher to devise. Third, because students themselves react toward punishment with a superficial acceptance and subsequent compliance. You see—it “works.” The question to ask here, as with the other disciplinary approaches, is: for whom? Punishment works for the teacher to the extent that it aids him in maintaining classroom order and surface acceptance of his authority. But, as noted above, punishment works against the student as a developing personality. And it must also be remembered that punishment inflicts a subtle injury upon the teacher, involving him in a punitive climate during all his working hours. And few individuals

³ Percival M. Symonds, “Classroom Discipline,” *Teachers College Record*, 51:147–158, December 1949.

⁴ Willard Olson, *Child Development* (Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1949), p. 338.

can resist the corrosive effects of such a climate, day after day and year after year.

There is another important reason for the use of punishment. Children, particularly among lower socioeconomic groups and some culturally less well-integrated ethnic groups, are often conditioned, through early family experiences, to understand and accept punishment. The child may be a less adequate person because of these conditions; yet he knows no other sanction that will command his obedience. For this reason, many lower-class children are simply amazed at a teacher who expects discipline from them on the basis of any other appeals. Olson's comment on this is very revealing:

It is quite probable that the differences in disciplinary and educational practices found in the most modern and the most traditional schools are to some extent imposed upon the schools by the cultural tradition of the home and community, and for school persons to act differently would be incongruent with social expectancy. There are also, however, indications that children from homes of lower economic status can be dealt with under conditions which will free them more fully and make them more spontaneous and less apathetic and restrained. The goals of most theories of discipline are more than obedience; they also include concepts of self-reliance, self-control, initiative, and independence of action.⁵

Thus we must conclude that what works for some children will not and should not work for others. Punishment should therefore be used sparingly and only because it is a part of a larger acculturation process, which must have as its objective the development in students of an understanding of self-discipline and an appreciation of the disciplines of reason, fact, and society.

Isolation

Teachers sometimes discipline students by isolating them in a corner of the room, sending them into the hall for a time, or sending them to the library. These students may be refused aid. "I'm sorry, but I won't help any student who does not remain in his seat like everyone else." Or, "Stanley, you just don't seem able to resist talking to your neighbors and bothering them; you will have to sit by yourself at the back table." Another method of isolation is to ignore provocative behavior as though it did not exist.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 227.

Such refusals of attention as we have just described get results. But the same question regarding how they work, and for whom, must be answered. Provocative behavior is motivated by some need; often it is an effort to gain attention that the child craves. Isolation reinforces the very craving that induced the behavior in the first place, and also makes the individual feel guilty about a need as basic as hunger. It is as though we said to a student: "If you once let me know you are hungry, I will refuse to give you food; if you don't show any hunger, then I will feed you." Isolation will probably result in a suppression of the undesirable behavior, but just as probably the cost to the individual will be great. This is not to say that teachers must react on the spot and at the moment when the provocative behavior occurs. Sometimes it is better to wait until there is time for private conference. When it is evident that the student cannot be reached in private conference, it may be necessary to plan carefully exactly what activities in the classroom can help him become a more acceptable class member. This technique then involves temporarily ignoring the provocative behavior until more strategic measures can be applied. This procedure is quite different from neglecting to react at all.

Emotional Blackmail

Both love and fear can be part of the emotional blackmail used by the teacher. The teacher who develops the feeling of "Now do this for me, because if you don't you will make me so unhappy," is being unfair.

Discipline was excellent. Mr. Halstead was a young teacher. He allowed the students to "buzz" a little almost whenever they wished. But if the buzzing became too loud, he would suddenly look very grieved and disgusted. After a moment or two of strained silence, he would burst into a mild tantrum in which he would shame the students for not acting their age. He would act hurt that he, who always treated them so well, should be subjected to this ungrateful treatment. His whole method of teaching seemed to be geared to a sort of a "proud but grieved parent" attitude.

Young people should be asked to do things in the classroom primarily because it is to their benefit as learners, because they are

part of a group endeavor. They should not be constantly reminded that any misbehavior hurts one who loves them dearly.

Individual vs. Group Discipline

Thus far we have presented three prevalent patterns of discipline. Before moving on to a statement of democratic discipline, we must consider two other major questions:

1. Is discipline to be directed against the individual or the group?
2. How can we know whether discipline "works"?

Here is an example in which a whole class was punished for the actions of a few:

A small boy came home with blue-pencil designs all over his arms. His mother was quite taken with this decoration and asked him when he had had time to do it in school. He explained that the whole class had had to sit still for half an hour and do nothing because some boys had been throwing oranges in the room. The mother said, "Well, that must certainly have made you mad at those boys who got you all punished." "Oh no," answered the boy, "it made us mad at the teacher."

Another instance from the elementary school:

A teacher divided the class into four groups. Each group worked together on many problems all semester. As each group produced the required work, they earned "money." But whenever any member of a group misbehaved, the group had a stated amount of "money" taken away. Observing the development of the social climate of the class, one could easily note how this method aroused great antagonisms among the children—suspicion, distrust, and hatred. Instead of welding group relationships, the teacher had set child against child. The burden of punishment that was given the group was too much for them to handle.

These examples can easily be translated into high school practices. Sometimes, in intramural team games, so much pressure is put on the team to win that relations among team members become tense and hostile. Using the group to discipline the individual can be done successfully only within carefully defined limits. The teacher

can, and usually should, express the idea: "In this class, we just don't interrupt people when they are talking." Or, "Even if you don't feel like studying, Janet, since everyone else is, let's not annoy them." This approach reminds the individual of his obligation to the group and is effective with normal misbehavior.

In most instances of misbehavior that arise from deep sources within the individual, the group approach can be effective only in a therapy situation. Most of the teacher's efforts should be directed to understanding the individual and his problem, since the origins of the problem extend far beyond *this* classroom and *this* course.

Did It Work?

Now to the most difficult of all the questions that must be answered concerning discipline: Did it work? One of the greatest frustrations of high school teaching is the lack of continued contact with students. The teacher has a group for five days a week, an hour a day, for four months; then the students are gone. This contact is very slight indeed compared with the six hours a day, five days a week, for a whole school year, which is the privilege of the elementary teacher. The teacher who tries to help a troubled student, who seeks to work with him and give him support and guidance and direction in his attempts to adjust to a confusing and threatening world, finds it discouraging to see him move on to another group of teachers. He may be left with the feeling that all his efforts have failed. It is not often that a high school teacher is in touch with a student after he graduates and takes his place in the world, and this too makes it difficult to assess the effects of the teacher's methods of control. Did they actually make Douglas more self-directing? Did Jane really learn how to control her explosive temper? After all, it is the long-range effects that concern the teacher who desires to utilize democratic methods of discipline. But the teacher is almost invariably denied any knowledge of such long-range effects.

Democratic Discipline

Let us then seek to develop some criteria of short-range effects that might guide the teacher here and now in determining whether some long-range good may be developing:

1. Are students developing an ability to obey rules because they understand what is reasonable?
2. Do students help one another in those situations that demand self-control? Does this helping occur because of concern for one another rather than because of a threatened reward or punishment from the teacher?
3. Does the need for the teacher to exercise control diminish as the group continues to work and learn together?
4. Can the students accept a substitute teacher or the unexpected absence of the teacher during the period without becoming disorganized or having to be held down by teacher threats?
5. Can the students develop their own rules of behavior and follow them fairly well?
6. Can students and teacher talk calmly together about class disturbances not anticipated in the rules and arrive at mutually acceptable compromises?
7. Are students who seem to be the source of major problems of discipline being helped by group integration or by outside guidance from teacher or specialists?
8. Does the teacher enter the classroom feeling relaxed and in a mood for work? Does this feeling grow throughout the semester?
9. Do students enter the classroom feeling relaxed and in a mood for work? Does this atmosphere develop during the semester?

The list above suggests questions that each teacher may use to evaluate the success of his own disciplinary techniques. The questions assume the same basic attitude toward teaching that was developed in the chapter on the democratic classroom. The theory of discipline advanced here is one that conforms to democratic ideals—namely, that discipline is merely the kind of classroom control that is most likely to further the development of democratic personalities.

Test Your Theories

On the following pages are a number of descriptions of discipline situations. Some are well handled; some are poorly handled; some are not resolved at all. It is suggested that each reader think through his

own line of procedure in each situation. He should ask himself: What is the possible consequence of the line of action taken or proposed? Does it jibe with my theory of democratic procedures? Would I feel satisfied if I continued to use such methods day in and day out?

When books were supposed to be closed during a discussion based on the assignment, Jane insisted on keeping hers open. The teacher went over to the girl's desk and quietly closed the book, letting the discussion continue.

I had trouble with one boy in the class. Why, I don't know. But one day I asked him in Spanish to stand up and recite. He indicated that he didn't understand. This response was repeated often. Finally, I asked him in English to stand up and met with open rebellion. I'm afraid I showed that I was angry with him and said that I would report him. At the end of the hour I spoke to him and asked him why he had acted in such a manner. His answer was that he didn't understand me. I accepted this and told him that I was very sorry I hadn't expressed myself more clearly and that I wouldn't report him. Since that day I haven't had any trouble with this student, even though he is the class cutup.

The class was small—approximately fifteen students. I noticed particularly two cases that could come under the heading of discipline problems. The first was that of a boy about seventeen years old, nice-looking, and seemingly no different in physical appearance or mental ability from the rest of the class. But he invariably slouched down in his chair, appearing to have no respect for the teacher and no interest in the class. Each day Mr. Aman remarked to Jim that his green shirt would look better if it weren't so wrinkled, or that he wouldn't get a stiff neck if he sat up straight. Jim would sit up for a few minutes, then sprawl once more. When Mr. Aman addressed the remarks to Jim, both laughed, as did the class. So there was no bitterness or tension, but neither was there any long-term success.

One day the class was to be tested. Jim had forgotten his pencil. There was a school rule that neither teachers nor pupils could lend pencils. Jim knew this, but without permission spoke up asking for a pencil. Mr. Aman told Jim to leave the room, and with no further remarks went on to administer the test.

The second case was that of a boy approximately sixteen years old, smaller in stature than the other boys in the class and of comparatively lower mentality than the rest of the group. He had a bad complexion, stuttered noticeably, and had a definite twitch in his left eye. To compensate for these deficiencies, Roger constantly

giggled and whispered to those nearest him, drew on the blackboard, and was generally inattentive. Mr. Aman asked him direct questions, trying to bring him into group discussions, but with little success. The boy seldom knew the answers. Frequently Mr. Aman, during study periods, told him to work and snapped his fingers to quiet him down. When Roger was talking, Mr. Aman would say, "Pardon me, Roger, I will have finished speaking in a moment." Mr. Aman had a good sense of humor, which, as somebody says, "is so obviously the most essential characteristic of skillful handlers of discipline problems . . . that its possession must be among the prime requisites for the job."

In the Spanish class George had a habit of saying in a most flip-pant manner when questioned, "What?" instead of "Pardon me." The teacher seized this opportunity to introduce the Spanish words meaning "pardon me" or "excuse me," thereby requiring the whole class to use the phrase.

The class came in. Indeed, the class rushed in. Senior boys and girls—shouting, pushing, joking, singing, teasing, arguing. The bell had not rung, and things were bound to quiet down with the 10:15 bell. The 10:15 bell rang. Senior boys and girls continued shouting, pushing, joking, singing, teasing, arguing. From 10:15 until approximately 10:30 you could hardly have heard a fire siren. Mr. Burgquist was, to all appearances, oblivious to the pandemonium, and thumbed through his notes unconcernedly. Finally, he had obviously had enough.

"QUIET!"

Wallet-passing, note-passing, and all talk came to an abrupt halt.

"I've told you a hundred times to keep quiet. . . ."

When some semblance of order had been restored, a certain routine of the class resumed. Throughout the hour, the room was filled with the exaggerated volume of the teacher's voice as he gave out instructions. It seemed to be more of a shout than a normal speaking voice. It had ceased being commanding but had retained its volume, and in a monotone this loud voice continued:

"Now get out your notes on yesterday's panel discussion for me to collect."

This was done, and while the instructor collected the papers from desk after desk, the noise began again. Not so loud as before, to be sure, but it had potentialities.

Fully half the hour had gone by before the actual instruction began. The topic for discussion during this week's class meetings was juvenile delinquency. Each day a report was given by a student on some phase of the problem. As the report was given, the rest of

the class took notes, which were to be handed in the following day after having been transcribed into more readable form.

Isabel, tiny, shy, and nervous, walked to the front of the room and began telling the class of her visit to Girls' State in Sacramento and of the speeches and board meetings there that were directly concerned with delinquency in the state. The class was valiantly attempting to copy down every word Isabel said—or rather read from her notes in front of the class. She was interrupted repeatedly by the other students, who said that she was going too fast, that they couldn't hear her, and would she mind starting over again from the beginning, please. The students, for the most part, were little concerned with what Isabel had to say except that they had to write it down "to hand in tomorrow."

Isabel never did complete the report, for the instructor had some announcements to get out of the way before the bell rang. But what the teacher announced had little effect upon the students, since they didn't have to write it down and hand it back tomorrow. They were, instead, busily engaged in exchanging everything from snapshots to gossip to wallets to notes.

The procedure set up by the instructor was that all students should be in their seats by 8:25 A.M. with books open, ready to work. No student would be allowed to sharpen his pencil during the early part of the class hour, as this should have been taken care of prior to the beginning of the class. Any student who wished to use the adding machines had to raise his hand and ask the permission of the instructor prior to walking to the machine. Several students lost considerable working time waiting for permission to go to the adding machines because the instructor was helping someone else and did not notice their raised hands. The instructor felt that classroom discipline, especially around the adding machines, where students would congregate and talk, was getting lax. He thought he had better crack down now and ease up gradually later on.

SUMMARY

In the preceding two chapters we have discussed some major kinds of discipline situations. From the text of these chapters, it is clear that there is no formula that covers all cases, all students, all times and places. The teacher who seeks to develop an optimal learning situation brings primarily a point of view, an attitude of mind, and a sensitive eye for adolescent attempts at adjustment.

The best preparation for becoming skillful in the area of classroom control is continued observation of other teachers and continued self-appraisal—"What would I have done differently?" It is also helpful to role-play some of the crucial teacher-student situations and see what it is *you* can say or do that will create the atmosphere you are seeking. Often, by trying several different versions, by seeing others try their ways of dealing with problem situations, teachers gain skill in rising to the needs of the occasion.

Democratic classroom discipline is essential to the development of the democratic classroom; one cannot exist without the other, and neither occurs without careful preparation, study, and continued appraisal of progress.

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- Brandes, L. G. "Meeting the Discipline Problems of our High Schools," *National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin*, 40: 104-116 (September 1956). Specific discussion of problems common to many teachers and administrators is presented.
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- Hymes, J. L. "Persistent Misbehavior Means that There Is Something Wrong Some Place," *NEA Journal*, 45:343-344 (September 1956). Practical suggestions for all teachers are described.
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- Nelson, D. N., R. Cochrane, P. W. Schmidtchen "Behavior Problems," *Clearing House*, 31:262-270 (January 1957). The authors do not present ready-made solutions to all behavior problems but they do demonstrate some techniques and viewpoints that are effective.
- Oliva, Peter F. "High School Discipline in American Society," *National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin*, 40:1-103 (January 1956). Teachers, administrators, students, parents and college educators indicate that discipline is a major educational problem. The emphasis is on the role of self-discipline in a democracy.
- Pfeiffer, I. L. "Not Discipline Again," *Clearing House*, 31:403-406 (March 1957). The author offers help for the beginning teacher on one of the major problems he will face.
- "Teacher Opinion on Pupil Behavior," *NEA Research Bulletin*, 34: Bulletin No. 2, April 1956. Teachers voice their appraisal of current problems in student behavior.
- Van Til, W. A. "Better Curriculum, Better Discipline," *NEA Journal*, 45:345 (September 1956). The writer presents the view that improvement in curriculum will help discipline problems.

Testing Instruments

Mrs. Ramon was talking with Mr. Davenport. "I am really enjoying the projects we are carrying on in my fifth-period class. I let the class decide how it wanted to study our next unit of work, and the group decided, after much talk, that it wanted to work as committees. It wants to put all of the findings into a living-newspaper presentation for an assembly. But do you know what worries me? I don't know how much they are learning! They seem to be going full speed and doing an amazing amount of extra reading. I overhear fascinating arguments about the material being collected, but how do I know just what is being learned?"

Mr. Davenport was a most appreciative listener. "I know just how you feel. But from what I know of students in the class, they are learning something. You must have noticed that John England is actually interested in a school subject for the first time since he has been here. And Sue Carrington has stopped her incessant giggling at least long enough to make really first-class posters. And it hasn't just happened to them. I know, because I get them the period after you have them and I hear their comments."

THIS CONVERSATION emphasizes what can happen when teachers recognize the differences among their students and try to provide the group with a variety of materials and activities. It is then that the

old measurements of learning fail. They simply will not register all the important changes that occur. Full appraisal of these learnings necessitates a whole new concept of evaluation.

The Purposes of Evaluation

Of course, it is still true that teachers and students need to know whether the experiences provided are having the desired effects. Even in the most informal activities both may wonder, "How well are we doing?" And, in a larger sense, the school has a basic responsibility to gather evidence that it really is helping youth mature into competent citizens. It is still important to know (1) how well all adolescents are progressing along this road; (2) whether some are making generally better progress than others; (3) whether some are making better progress in some aspects of the program and doing poorly in others; (4) whether the school as a whole is contributing its utmost to the development of useful citizens; and (5) whether some parts of the school program are doing a better job than others. Adequate evaluation means that all of these differences in the quality of learning are recorded and interpreted. In addition, we must include two more purposes of evaluation: (6) the individual himself wishes to view his progress in terms of his own capabilities and in comparison with the progress of others; and (7) the teacher seeks knowledge of the comparative effectiveness of various materials and experiences both with groups of children and with individual children. When we think of evaluation in this broad sense, we wonder how we can ever collect data to answer all of the questions. Yet it is not only possible but essential that we know how well we are doing in terms of these seven major evaluative inquiries. Fortunately, we now have techniques that will give us some information about each of them.

There appear to be three major areas of concern in the evaluation of student achievement and growth: (1) constructing and using tests and examinations in the classroom; (2) grading and reporting student achievement; and (3) developing a point of view toward evaluation—seeing the evaluation process as a whole. This and the

following chapter will consider the three broad areas noted above, with emphasis on the best practice in terms of the realities of today's secondary schools.

Constructing and Using Tests

Every teacher will be faced with the problem of making tests, even though it will be clear from the discussion of evaluation to follow that tests provide only one kind of information about student progress. However, this kind of information about achievements in understanding and skill is important and necessary. We will briefly discuss here some guides for the development of testing instruments:

A good test:

1. *Is valid.* The test measures what it is supposed to measure.
2. *Is reliable.* The test is consistent in its measurement.
3. *Is objective.* Two scorers would give the same score to the same response.
4. *Has a clearly defined purpose*—diagnostic, achievement, or motivational.
5. *Provides test items consonant with these purposes.* Diagnostic items reveal strengths and weaknesses. Achievement items place students in rank order; each student occupies a position in relation to other students according to his mastery of those achievements tested. Motivational items stimulate further study.
6. *Provides emphasis on test items according to that which is stressed in teaching.* If ability to think critically is stressed, the items should not emphasize retention of facts.
7. *Uses items of more than one type in order to extend the scope of measurement*—for example, completion, multiple-choice, true-false, matching, essay.
8. *Arranges items in a progression from easy to difficult.* Difficult items, if used at the beginning of the test, discourage the less able from trying at all. The average student should make 50 per cent of the possible score.

9. *Provides for ease of administration and interpretation.* The directions are clear and succinct. The scoring key has been made out in advance so that students can be informed exactly how the items will be scored.

A *poor test*:

1. *Has a jumble of purposes.*
2. *Is used as threat or punishment.*
3. *Consistently penalizes some students:* those who work slowly, those who need time to think.
4. *Emphasizes rote memory exclusively.*
5. *Stresses unimportant details.*
6. *Uses ambiguous questions and methods of scoring.*

Tests may serve to corrode the relationship between teacher and student. The atmosphere surrounding tests is often charged with fear. For this reason alone, the teacher should use tests with care. Learning does not occur where fear of failure is constant. The wrong kind of test may produce this unhealthy climate.

Using Essay Tests

Tests, then, must be used with discrimination. Follow-up discussions of just why a given answer was right or wrong or better or worse are mandatory. The essay examination, for example, requires great skill in organizing ideas quickly, logically, and lucidly, with concomitant skill in the manipulation of language. Teachers might well spend several days' time in studying the essay answer intensively and in providing many opportunities for practicing this kind of writing.

In this discussion, teachers and students should consider the advantages and limitations of the essay test, how it is constructed, and how it is scored. The following outline indicates important considerations for anyone using essay tests:

1. Limitations

(a) Low validity

- (1) Limited sampling
- (2) Irrelevant factors considered: handwriting, appearance

- (b) Low reliability.
 - (1) Subjective scoring: physical and mental condition of scorer, the halo effect of other students' papers
- 2. Advantages
 - (a) Useful in measuring ability to organize, interpret, evaluate, apply
 - (b) Useful in measuring ability to summarize, outline; to see relationships and trends
 - (c) Useful in measuring ability to write fluently and clearly
- 3. Precautions in construction
 - (a) Increase number of questions and restrict length of response
 - (b) Indicate specifically areas to be discussed
- 4. Scoring
 - (a) Prepare a response to each question in advance; each point should be given a weight for scoring
 - (b) Read through once for general organization and again for details
 - (c) Note each error and point omitted and write down the amount deducted (making allowance for additional pertinent, but not anticipated, points)
 - (d) Grade one question at a time for all papers
 - (e) If there is time, divide papers into groups by grades and re-read some to see if quality of response is consistent

Examples of Essay Test Items

Here are several examples of fairly well-constructed essay test items:

English

- She glanced through the fly-specked windows of the most pretentious building in sight, the one place which welcomed strangers and determined their opinion of the charm and luxury of Gopher Prairie—the Minniemashie House. It was a tall lean shabby structure, three stories of yellow-streaked wood, the corners covered with sanded pine slabs purporting to symbolize stone. In the hotel office she could see a stretch of bare unclean floor, a line of rickety chairs with brass cuspidors between,
- (1)
 - (2)
 - (3)
 - (4)
 - (5)
 - (6)
 - (7)
 - (8)
 - (9)

a writing-desk with advertisements in mother-of-pearl letters upon a glass-covered back. The dining room beyond was a jungle of stained tablecloths and catsup bottles.

She looked no more at the Minniemashie House.

1. What would you say is the writer's own opinion of the Minniemashie House?
2. What method does the writer employ predominantly in attempting to achieve the desired effect?
3. Is that effect successful, and upon what do you base your judgment?
4. What does the writer imply in his reference to "the charm and luxury of Gopher Prairie"? What literary technique is exemplified in this particular part of the passage; that is, what name do we give to this method of conveying one's meaning?
5. What is the meaning of the word "rickety" in line 9?
6. What is the meaning of the word "symbolize" in line 7?
7. The last line is an example of what formal means of achieving emphasis?

General Science

A woman planted some flower seeds beside her house. The plants did not grow very well. The woman next door planted seeds of the same kind of flower. These plants grew very well. The first woman wondered why her flower plants did not grow as well as those of the woman next door. What information must you have before you can tell her why?

Social Studies

The financial position of the national government itself was precarious. It had been impossible to finance the war from current taxation. Between 1812 and 1816 bond issues to a total face value of \$80,000,000 were floated. Yet the returns measured in terms of specie were disappointing—only about \$34,000,000. By these operations the national debt reached the staggering total of about \$125,000,000.

1. Was the federal "budget" balanced? Explain.
2. Were the government bonds marketed above or below par? Explain.
3. What was the condition of government credit? Explain.

Using "Objective" Tests

The so-called objective type of test question is objective only in the sense that there are fewer ambiguities about what constitutes the

correct answer. In essay questions the correct answer depends on many subjective factors, and this frequently leaves the person being graded most insecure. The reaction to objective tests is usually less violent, probably because of this difference in the subjectivity of grading. But the objectivity of the "objective" examination ends there. Even "objective" test items are subjectively selected and represent the test maker's ideas about what should be learned. And here teachers and other test makers differ radically. What is vital and significant to one may be dull and trivial to the other. Again and again, the teacher who utilizes the objective test must ask, "Is what I am testing for really worth learning? Should the students retain this understanding or this skill for a week, a month, for five years, for the rest of their lives?"

The major kinds of objective tests are:

1. Completion

Example: *Chlorophyll is usually found in ——.*

2. True-false

Example: T F *Edgar Allen Poe lived before Walt Whitman.*

3. Multiple-choice

Example: *From what export does Australia derive its largest income?*

- (a) iron
- (b) gold
- (c) wool
- (d) cotton

4. Matching

Example: *Match the following individuals with the word that best describes the achievement of each:*

Edison	dynamite
Ford	telephone
Bell	electricity
Clinton	locomotive
	steamship
	automobile

The following table gives in a compact form the chief problems of construction of each of these types, the advantages and limitations of each one, and the situations in which they can be used most effectively.

	COMPLETION	TRUE-FALSE
1. Situations for which effective	Information: who, when, what, where, how many	1. Beliefs, attitudes, superstitions 2. Only two possibilities 3. General survey of field
2. Advantages	1. Easy to construct 2. Requires adequate basis for response (difficult to guess)	1. Easy to construct 2. Wide sampling
3. Limitations	1. Subjective scoring 2. Inconvenient to score 3. Emphasizes rote response	1. Ambiguities 2. Guessing
4. Precautions in constructing	1. Use brief response 2. Use direct question if possible 3. Avoid textbook language 4. Avoid grammatical clue 5. Provide blank near end, if incomplete type 6. Assure scoring convenience 7. Avoid overutilization (too many blanks) 8. Avoid indefinite statements 9. Omit only key words 10. Make response lines of same and of adequate length 11. Give credit to any correct response (even if not the desired one)	1. Provide convenient arrangement for scoring 2. Use approximately equal T and F items 3. See that crucial element stands out in item 4. Avoid "traps" 5. Avoid textbook language 6. Avoid clues 7. Do not use subordinate clauses 8. Do not use negatives 9. Remember longer statement is more likely to be true 10. Make test long enough 11. Avoid ambiguity 12. Avoid partly true

	MULTIPLE-CHOICE	MATCHING
1. Situations for which effective	Most generally applicable	Information: who, what, when, where
2. Advantages	1. Easy to score 2. Many adaptations available 3. Easy to give	1. Compact 2. Reduces guessing 3. Easy to construct
3. Limitations	Laborious to construct	1. Necessity for using single words or very brief phrases 2. Probability of clues 3. Probability of related errors
4. Precautions in construction	1. Provide choices at end of statement 2. Remember that question form is sometimes better than incomplete sentence 3. Avoid textbook or standardized language 4. Avoid making the longer response always the correct one or vice versa 5. Avoid grammatical clues 6. Use plausible distractors 7. Avoid ambiguity 8. Avoid pattern, as in having the third response consistently the correct response 9. Provide at least four choices	1. Keep numbers small (10-15 items) 2. Provide extra responses (especially if less than 10) 3. Provide consistency in classification: all men, all battles 4. Attend to mechanical arrangement, keeping responses in alphabetical or some other order 5. Use only one correct match for each item 6. Place all items on one page

Examples of Objective Test Items

Below are some examples of acceptable test items for each type of test in a number of different fields. Sample directions are given for each type. Note that answer spaces are provided uniformly at one side of the test paper, which makes it possible to prepare simple scoring keys on strips of cardboard to be placed alongside the answer spaces.

Completion

Each statement below has a blank where a word or number is missing. Write this missing word or number in the space at the left of the statement.

- _____ The author who originated the detective story in American literature was _____.
- _____ The title of the short story which tells of the effect of the coming of a child to a Western community of rough and desperate men is _____.
- _____ The section of the United States in which *Death Comes to the Archbishop* is set is _____.
- _____ One way to represent the world is by a map, but a more accurate way is by a _____.
- _____ The legislative program and policies of Franklin D. Roosevelt were known as the _____.
- _____ Car engines should not be run in a small garage with the doors closed because the engine's exhaust contains _____.
- _____ A vitamin whose absence in diet is related to the development of rickets is _____.
- _____ In determining the specific gravity of a liquid, we usually use an instrument called a _____.

True-False

Below is a series of statements. Some are true and some are false. If you believe a statement to be always true exactly as it is stated, circle T; if not, circle F. Do not guess.

- T F *The Citadel* and *Arrowsmith* are both novels about college professors.
- T F Lincoln Steffens was an American journalist.
- T F The Justices of the Supreme Court serve for a term of six years.
- T F The "Cross of Gold" in Bryan's famous speech represented income taxes.

- T F Eye color is due entirely to heredity.
 T F A widely used metal for filaments in electric light bulbs is magnesium.

Multiple-Choice

Below is a series of questions or incomplete statements. These are followed by several words, phrases, or series of numbers. Select the one which answers the question or completes the statement. Place the letter of that word, phrase, or series of numbers in the blank space at the left.

- _____ This passage suggests the writings of (a) Browning, (b) Milton, (c) Pope, (d) Addison.
- _____ The attitude toward the common people expressed in this quotation is that of (a) Johnson, (b) Pope, (c) Wordsworth, (d) Keats.
- _____ The most significant characteristic of Lady Macbeth is (a) fear of moral torment, (b) patriotism, (c) ambition for her husband, (d) gentleness of nature, (e) generosity toward her enemies.
- _____ His interest in Italian freedom appears in his writings: (a) Browning, (b) Chaucer, (c) Milton, (d) Shakespeare, (e) Thackeray.
- _____ Freedom of the press, as provided in the national Bill of Rights, means that the newspapers have the right to
 (a) Comment maliciously on events in the private lives of citizens without fear of being sued.
 (b) Print anything whatsoever without restriction.
 (c) Send their editors to Washington to lobby for legislation.
 (d) Send reporters to all sessions of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the government.
 (e) Criticize the policies of the government without fear of suspension of publication.
- _____ Common glass is essentially a mixture of
 (a) aluminates (d) borates
 (b) sulfates (e) nitrates
 (c) silicates
- _____ Which of the following is an anesthetic?
 (a) calcium oxide (d) nitrous oxide
 (b) carbon monoxide (e) sulfur dioxide
 (c) mercuric oxide

Matching

In the column at the left below is a series of words, and in the column at the right is another series of words. For each word in the

column at the left, select from the column at the right the word which is most nearly the same in meaning. In the spaces at the left of the numbers insert the letters of the words selected.

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------|
| _____ 1. arena | (a) amphitheater |
| _____ 2. assassination | (b) chopper |
| _____ 3. cleaver | (c) contest |
| _____ 4. consternation | (d) dismay |
| _____ 5. potency | (e) forerunner |
| _____ 6. preamble | (f) fulcrum |
| | (g) murder |
| | (h) preface |
| | (i) strength |
| | (j) warfare |

In the column at the left below is a series of statements, and in the column at the right is a series of names. Select the names which correctly identify the statements and place the number of the correct name in the space at the left of the statement.

- | | |
|--|--------------------|
| _____ His revolt against the Church probably would have been unsuccessful had the Emperor not been engaged in foreign warfare. | 1. Henry VIII |
| _____ His conflict with the Church netted him great economic advantages. | 2. John Huss |
| _____ He was instrumental in reclaiming a large part of Germany for Catholicism. | 3. Ignatius Loyola |
| | 4. Martin Luther |
| | 5. St. Dominic |

For each group of items below, place in the blank before each word or phrase in the left-hand list the letter of the word or phrase in the right-hand list with which it is most directly associated.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| _____ 1. Anopheles mosquito | (a) bubonic plague |
| _____ 2. Rat | (b) influenza |
| _____ 3. Tsetse fly | (c) malaria |
| | (d) smallpox |
| | (e) sleeping sickness |

The teacher will spend many hours making tests and marking them. And students will spend many hours preparing to take tests. Certainly, then, tests should be so constructed as to provide both student and teacher with specific information about how much has been achieved in the areas being tested.

Since this part of teaching is so important, we are fortunate that major attention has been given to the measurement of achievement in a large number of *standardized tests*. In the next section of this chapter will be discussed the value and uses of these tests as a supplement to those tests the teacher fashions himself.

Standardized Tests

First, we need to refresh our understanding of what the term *standardized* means.

1. The process of standardizing a test begins when the test maker tries to find out what attitudes, understandings, and skills should be represented in ninth-grade arithmetic, or tenth-grade English literature, or twelfth-grade United States history. This information may be obtained from textbook analysis, examination of courses of study, or judgment of experts. In power tests, the information may represent only the author's opinion.

2. Various test items are tried on large numbers of students, who represent many geographical areas and many kinds of schools. Those combinations of questions which are able to measure a range of achievement are retained. Usually several combinations of items are culled so that more than one form of the test can be constructed.

3. Specific methods for administering the test (directions, time limits) are established.

4. Scoring rules and keys are developed.

5. Norms are prepared, which make possible the comparison of individual scores with national average scores.

Standardization is intended to secure validity, reliability, objectivity, and ease of administration. As we said earlier in the chapter, validity is the crucial element of any test. The process of standardization does not guarantee validity. It is very instructive to check any recognized test in *Buros' Mental Measurements Yearbooks*.¹ Here each test is given reviews by a number of experts in the field. It is the rare test on which the experts concur on validity.

The tentativeness with which the results of these tests must be

¹ O. K. Buros, *Mental Measurements Yearbooks* (Highland Park, New Jersey: The Gryphon Press).

viewed is increased when we consider local conditions in detail. A specific class may very well have agreed on additional objectives not contemplated in the test. Especially may this be true in the development of attitudes. Further, the national norms lump together all manner of students in all kinds of schools under all kinds of teachers. A class of superior capacity and environment deserves no special recognition for exceeding the performance of the national average. Nor should a class of inferior capacity and environment deserve strong censure for falling below that average. True, the test maker does not intend to license either reaction. No harm is done so long as administrators, school boards, teachers, parents, and students remember that the established standards can be applied to particular classes only with a large tolerance. It is important to keep reminding ourselves that in any kind of national average—whether of height, weight, physical dexterity, or achievement in academic matters—individuality is deliberately hammered out.

This is not to say that standardized achievement tests do not have their place in a modern evaluation program. Within the limitations we have noted, the tests indicate where the class stands in relation to other classes. The tests help to diagnose weaknesses in class and individual achievement and so guide future instruction. In short, used with many other means of evaluation, the standardized test serves a useful purpose. Only when these tests are considered almost the sole gauge of learning is there serious damage to good education.

In the test publishers' catalogs are listed many tests of achievement. Sample tests are available from the publishers at nominal cost. Many teachers find it useful to check test catalogs annually and send for the new instruments in their teaching field. In this way, they keep informed of the new techniques in testing.

What criteria can guide the teacher in selecting appropriate standardized tests? The following list gives some standards to assist teachers in checking tests and the accompanying test manuals:

Validity. What is the test supposed to measure? On what basis were these test goals chosen? Was it on the basis of meeting *both* individual and social needs? What research was used to determine how these needs might be met through this test content?

Reliability. Most standardized tests are available in at least two versions. What evidence is presented to show that this test consistently yields a similar score, regardless of which version is used? Test experts usually say that for individual students a test should show a reliability coefficient of about .80. This coefficient indicates the degree of correlation between scores on the various versions of the test. The higher the decimal fraction, the closer the test comes to yielding the same score on its various versions.

Objectivity. Good tests ensure that identical scores will be secured with equally competent scorers. Is the test key so precise throughout that no doubt exists about the correct response?

Ease of administration and scoring. The directions in the manual should be so clear that the test can be given with ease and under comparable circumstances each time it is used. Does the manual tell exactly how to give and score the test? Or does it leave ambiguities and questions unanswered?

Norms. The manual or a supplement should list average or median scores earned by students who have taken the test. These norms should be revised regularly. The character of the school populations from which the norms were derived should be indicated. Preferably, the norms should be given for each tenth of the school year, since achievement obviously varies from September to June.

Standardized tests, besides showing achievement in relation to other large groups of students, can provide the teacher with suggestions for testing achievement in his own homemade tests. The teacher can find out, for example, how best to word certain kinds of test items. The standardized test has been tried on many students, and the teacher can therefore be assured that the average student will understand the test items as constructed. Thus he might well select from a standardized test some items to use as models.

In this chapter we have presented so far some of the main considerations that should guide the teacher in making his own tests and in selecting and using standardized tests. In addition, there are some newer types of examinations and tests that should be considered. These tests, which can be made by the individual teacher and are also available from commercial publishing firms, are discussed in the section below.

Some Departures from Traditional Tests

In recent years educators have been increasingly concerned with some of the more intangible outcomes of education: Are students' attitudes changed by course content and experiences? Are students developing ability to think logically? What is the pattern of social understanding of young people? Out of such inquiries have come some very stimulating evaluation tools. The tests constructed to evaluate the progress made by students in the Eight-Year Study show particular originality and depth of inquiry into the abiding purposes of instruction. An example of a test developed by this study to measure ability to think logically is given below.²

PROBLEM III.

A science class was studying methods of caring for the skin. The teacher described the following experiment and stated the conclusion which had been drawn from it. "A large bottle of each of the five leading brands of hand lotion was purchased from a drugstore. The lotion in each bottle was thoroughly mixed by shaking the bottle for three minutes. Five exactly similar water glasses, one for each lotion, were set in a row on a table, and a piece of filter paper was placed over the open top of each glass. Each brand of lotion was tested by pouring a half teaspoonful of it on the piece of filter paper. For the first brand of hand lotion, drops appeared in the water glass within thirty seconds. The four other brands all took longer than one minute, and two brands failed to filter through at all." *This experiment shows that the first brand of lotion is absorbed by the skin more readily than any of the others.*

I. Directions: In this part, you are to do two things:

Select all statements which could logically be used to support the italicized conclusion. Blacken the space under A opposite the number of each such statement.

At the same time, select all statements which might make the underlined conclusion less acceptable. Blacken the space under B opposite the number of each such statement.

In this part of the test, your decision about a statement should not be influenced by whether you believe the idea expressed to be true or false.

(NOTE: Answers to questions 1 and 2 are given in the left-hand column. The statements to be left blank by the student are marked "Irrelevant" in the answer column.)

² Eugene Smith, Ralph W. Tyler, and staff, *Appraising and Recording Student Progress* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1942), pp. 136-139.

Statements for I and II:

- | | |
|------------|---|
| A C | 1. The contents of one large bottle of a certain brand of hand lotion are exactly like the contents of any other large bottle of the same brand of hand lotion. |
| Irrelevant | 2. The liquid which is absorbed most readily by the skin is the most effective in softening the hands. |
| B | 3. To be absorbed by the skin a hand lotion need not pass through the skin. |
| Irrelevant | 4. Hand lotions are of doubtful value. |
| A C | 5. The faster a liquid drips through filter paper, the faster it will be absorbed by the human skin. |
| A C | 6. The pores of the skin are quite similar to the little holes between the fibers of filter paper. |
| A | 7. Since each bottle was given a thorough shaking, the results for each lotion were typical of the performance of the lotion in that bottle. |
| B | 8. The "pores" in filter paper are constructed quite differently from the "pores" in the human skin. |
| Irrelevant | 9. The experiment was probably intended to make sales for some cosmetics manufacturer. |
| B | 10. Although drops of a liquid first appeared in the water glass, certain ingredients of the first lotion may have been retained by the filter paper. |
| Irrelevant | 11. The speed with which a lotion drips through filter paper is no indication of its effectiveness in softening the skin. |
| B | 12. Water will penetrate filter paper but is not absorbed by the skin. |
| Irrelevant | 13. The obvious way to test the five lotions is to try them on the hands of a large group of people. |
| A | 14. The amounts of lotion placed on each piece of filter paper were very nearly the same. |

II. Directions: Select from the statements already marked under A (the supporting statements) those which you would challenge because you are not convinced they are true enough to be used in supporting the underlined conclusion. Blacken the space under C opposite the number of each such statement.

III. Directions: Conclusions A, B, and C are stated below. Choose the one which seems to you to be most consistent with your analysis of the situation described in the problem. In the block at the top of the answer sheet, blacken the space A, B, or C to indicate the conclusion which you choose.

Conclusions:

- A. This experiment does not help in deciding which one of the hand lotions would be most readily absorbed by the skin.
- B. The experiment suggests that the first brand of hand lotion is absorbed by the skin more readily than any of the others, but the experiment would have to be repeated several times.
- C. The experiment shows that the first brand of hand lotion is absorbed by the skin more readily than any of the others.

IV. Directions: Hand lotions are commonly used to replace the oils in the outer layers of the skin which are lost through excessive exposure, washing, and other causes. Hence it may be less important to study the extent to which a lotion penetrates the layers of the skin than to study its effect upon the surface of the skin. The statements presented below describe some activities which have been suggested to study the effectiveness of a hand lotion in keeping the skin soft in the absence of an adequate supply of natural skin oils.

Select all statements that describe activities which you think would help in studying this effect of a hand lotion upon the skin. Blacken the space under A opposite the number of each such statement.

In this part of the test, your decision about a statement should not be influenced by whether you believe the activity described could actually be carried out.

(NOTE: Answers to questions 4 and 5 are given in the left-hand column. The statements to be left blank by the student are marked "Irrelevant" in the answer column.)

Statements for IV and V:

- | | |
|------------|--|
| A B | 15. Secure a description of the structure of the human skin. |
| Irrelevant | 16. Find out the names of the companies which manufacture each of the brands of hand lotion used in the experiment. |
| A | 17. Make a precise laboratory analysis of each of several brands of hand lotion to find out the amounts and properties of its principal ingredients, such as vegetable oils, water, etc. |
| Irrelevant | 18. Repeat the experiment several times with the same five lotions and under exactly the same conditions. |
| A B | 19. Set up an experiment in which ten boys and ten girls apply a hand lotion to one hand and no hand lotion to the other hand once each day for a month and compare the results. |
| Irrelevant | 20. Send out a questionnaire to a large number of users of hand lotion to find out which brand is most popular. |
| A B | 21. Use hand lotions regularly on several parts of the body and compare the results. |
| A | 22. Set up an experiment to compare the natural skin oils to the oils contained in hand lotions. |

- Irrelevant 23. Compare the absorbing power of filter paper and human skin.
- A B 24. Look for published information about some of the good and bad effects of using different brands of hand lotion.

V. Directions: Select from the statements already marked under A only things which you think you or your class in high school could actually carry out. Blacken the space under B opposite the number of each such statement.

Even more difficult to measure than the ability to think logically is the development of attitudes. But some promising beginnings have been made in setting up such tests. Below is an example:³

IV. Mr. and Mrs. Smith have three children, 18-year-old Jack, 16-year-old Sally, and 13-year-old Mary. They have a car and own their home. All the children are in school. Indicate those of the following statements concerning such families as the Smiths with which you agree and those with which you disagree.

- | | |
|--|---------|
| 17. Jack should be allowed to use the car any evening his father does not need it for business provided Jack has a driver's license, drives carefully, and takes and calls for his sisters when they go out. | 17. A D |
| 18. Mr. Smith should spend some time each week with his children no matter how tired or busy he is. | 18. A D |
| 19. Mr. and Mrs. Smith should always consider the wishes and welfare of their children before their own. | 19. A D |
| 20. Sally should be encouraged to choose her own clothes. | 20. A D |
| 21. All three children should have a regular allowance, whether they work part-time or not. | 21. A D |
| 22. Mrs. Smith should make the rules concerning the children's personal affairs. | 22. A D |
| 23. Mr. Smith should make the rules concerning family financial matters. | 23. A D |
| 24. All three children should help decide what courses to take and when they should quit school, even though their parents have planned professional careers for them. | 24. A D |
| 25. Jack should not be expected to spend as much time with his family as Sally does. | 25. A D |

³ Excerpts from *Judgments Characteristic of the Socially Competent Person*, Form A (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1936).

- | | |
|---|---------|
| 26. Sally and Mary should be at home by 10 P.M. every night; Jack, being a boy and older, should be allowed to stay out as long as he wishes provided he is strong and healthy. | 26. A D |
| 27. Sally should be allowed to entertain her friends in the living room whenever she wishes, unless Jack plans to have a party at home. | 27. A D |
| 28. Sally should spend a large share of her leisure time with Mary. | 28. A D |
| 29. Sally's friends should include both boys and girls. | 29. A D |
| 30. The children should spend most of their leisure time with their friends rather than with one another, since the interests of the various members of the family differ considerably. | 30. A D |
| 31. All five members of the family should help in choosing activities which include the entire family. | 31. A D |
| 32. In selecting clothes, Sally and Jack should consider the opinions of their friends rather than of their family. | 32. A D |
| 33. When the children are at home their interests and wishes rather than those of the parents should determine what radio programs are to be heard. | 33. A D |

These departures from traditional tests are still rarely used by the classroom teacher. They have been used primarily by research workers. It is true that they are difficult to construct and that questions of validity and reliability are much more likely to be raised, though the same questions could be asked with equal pertinence about the traditional test patterns. If a teacher seeks to depart from the usual patterns and evolve newer and perhaps more significant evaluation tools of his own, the working suggestions given below will be helpful:

Build a test file of questions and ideas. By continuously working up test items instead of waiting until the last moment, the teacher will be able to use varying combinations to reveal more adequately the strengths and weaknesses of his students.

Use students to help build tests. Often a teacher can ask his brightest students to prepare new kinds of test items similar to those used by the Eight-Year Study. These can be filed and used for current and future classes.

Try out new testing devices. Often a teacher can try out some new device and invite the class to join the experiment. Thus the

class is not fearful of a new situation. Their own reactions to, criticisms of, and comments on the "new" type of examination will help the teacher build adequate measures.

Keep abreast of the professional literature in general, and that of the special subject field in particular. The increasing professional concern over evaluation is seen in many stimulating descriptions of new approaches to evaluation, which are repeatedly to be found in the professional literature.

Some exciting ideas in evaluating individual ability have resulted from the need in the armed services to select special kinds of individuals for special jobs.⁴ Adaptations of some of these ideas to evaluation in teacher education suggest possible lines of development for high school classroom use.⁵

Classroom Management and the Giving of Tests and Examinations

Many teachers find that tests and examinations pose some special problems in classroom routines. Will the examination be put on the blackboard, or chalkboard? Will the examination be duplicated? How will the examinations be returned?

Let us look at some of these problems. Where schools have insufficient duplicating equipment, the teacher may have to rely primarily on the blackboard, or chalkboard, or on oral tests. If test questions are read, students who finish the question quickly must wait until the last slow student has finished writing. However, for some kinds of tests, such as true-false, fill-in, or very short answer, reading the questions may be an adequate procedure. In a room with poor acoustics, of course, this procedure may be a severe trial for students in badly located seats. We recall a teacher trying to give a spelling test in a room with a bad echo. The students were doing consistently poor work on the tests. When the teacher had to use

⁴ Office of Strategic Services, *The Assessment of Men* (New York: Rinehart and Company, 1948), and Henry Harris, *The Group Approach to Leadership Testing* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1949).

⁵ Jean D. Grambs, "Some New Examination Patterns in Teacher Education," *Educational Administration and Supervision*, 36:403-410, November 1950.

another room because of some alterations in the one she had been using, she found a startling improvement in the spelling. The students had simply been unable to understand the words. Under such circumstances, oral reading of a test, particularly a spelling test, must be ruled out. What can we substitute for an oral spelling test? Students may give each other the test, as is often done in elementary schools. The spelling test may be a definitions test; that is, the student fills in the correct word in a sentence where only the required spelling word will fit. This type of sentence may be written on a blackboard, or chalkboard, avoiding the problems of oral testing.

If the blackboard or chalkboard is to be used, the teacher will want to have the test ready so that no time is wasted waiting for it to be copied. Some teachers put the test on before school, then lower a map or chart to cover it until time for the test. Other teachers put a long question on first, then, while the students are answering that one, continue to put the test on the board. This means, however, that the teacher is not able to observe the class while it is taking the first part of the test. In a class where the test is crucial to success, the teacher must be very alert to keep students working on their own papers. The wise teacher will, of course, avoid creating any such provocation or temptation to cheating in the first place.

Where facilities are available, it is most helpful to duplicate tests, since extraneous problems of listening or copying are minimized. More elaborate kinds of tests are then possible—tests that evaluate larger and more significant areas of learning. After the teacher has constructed several of these tests, he may keep a test-item file and shuffle the items around as appropriate for future classes.

One teacher finds it useful to cut up each test after it has been given, paste the items on separate cards, and cross-file them in a card file carefully indexed by subject and purpose. Another teacher builds her tests by having handy a small memorandum pad. Whenever some interesting item comes up in class, she jots down a question or problem that may be used in a test. By the end of a few weeks of study, this teacher has a quantity of possible test items and then merely goes back over them and selects the best. Some teachers prepare tests prior to teaching the unit, and then focus their teaching on the content or intellectual skills that will be evaluated.

How do teachers return tests? No test should be given unless, when it is returned, ample class time is given to a discussion of the questions, to providing correct answers, to reviewing ambiguous areas, to making sure that the students know what was to have been reported in the test. Some teachers have students do over those parts of the test that were missed, although this method may not always be the most profitable use of time by students. Of course, sometimes the material is fundamental and requires mastery by every student; then the teacher would do well to have some additional, *different* exercises for the students to complete. The student is then helped to a fresh view, which may assist him in learning the material.

A test should be returned as soon as possible after the students have taken it, so that the material is still alive and important. The day the test is to be returned, the teacher should plan to use the first ten minutes or so for supervised individual study. Then, while the students are reading or working out problems at their desks, the teacher can go around and quietly return each paper. This gives him an invaluable contact with each student. To Alice, who unexpectedly achieved a superior grade, the teacher can give a word of warm approval; to Harry, who turned in another poor test, the teacher can suggest the need for some special help—perhaps an after-school conference can be arranged. For each student, the teacher, as he returns the paper, should have some personal comment, no matter how slight, that shows he is aware of, and interested in, each individual's progress. The rewards of this rather simple device of personalizing the returning of papers will be great for teacher and student alike.

After all papers have been returned, the teacher will want to call the class to order, make some general comments on the level of achievement, perhaps place a distribution of grades on the board. Then he will ask the class for questions about any puzzling items. A rapid review of the questions will be in order, to be sure everyone understands what the answer might have been. After this session, the class might return to supervised study, so that students with individual problems on the test may talk privately with the teacher. It is best for the teacher to avoid public bickering over an answer. A student who thinks he has been graded incorrectly should be given time to talk individually with the teacher. The teacher

should always be ready to admit it when a real mistake has been made and adjust the student's grade accordingly. This kind of fairness is prized highly by students.

The procedure outlined for returning tests may be used in returning all written work. If the students have put their time into it, the teacher owes them a recognition of that effort and an honest evaluation of it. Probably the worst thing a teacher can do is to require written work, then throw it away, using it merely as a way of keeping the youngsters in their seats. The feeling of betrayal experienced by students will undermine the best morale we try to build.

Tests should be considered not only a means of evaluating progress, but a particularly valuable learning experience. Post-test discussions are often tremendously fruitful in developing new insight on the part of students previously puzzled or confused. The real value of an end-term examination is thus often lost.

A Note on Cheating

The pressure on the students to get good grades has been mentioned as a real factor in promoting cheating; getting the grade—by any means—is more important than being virtuous or acquiring genuine knowledge. Thus, if there is widespread cheating, the teacher will first want to see whether undue pressure is put on students to get grades, no matter how. But even when this pressure is not severe, we still have cheating. The instances of cheating we have observed have occurred almost always because the teacher, through his own management routines, made cheating almost inevitable. Objective tests are a “natural” for cheating. By glancing at a neighbor's paper, a student can quickly see his answer. An essay test is very difficult to cheat on. Since we cannot always give essay tests, and since it is difficult to use any other alternative—seating in alternate seats, having several versions of the same test—the teacher must devise other means to minimize cheating.

The best guarantee against cheating is the teacher's behavior during a test. At that time the teacher, wisely, is watching the

students. He observes those who are having trouble with the material, and he is ready to help an individual who does not understand the directions. But he is also watching to see that each student works on his own paper. One cannot view the whole classroom while seated at a desk. During a test, the teacher who is concerned about cheating stations himself strategically at the back of the room. The students, with their backs to him, cannot tell whether he is watching them or not—and potential cheating is nipped in the bud! He can walk around the room, too, observing how the students are attacking the test questions. But certainly he should keep his eye on the class. A test—if it is important, and if cheating is a problem—is not the time for the teacher to bury himself at his desk behind a stack of homework papers.

It is our hope, of course, that in time we can develop a true “honor system” among students. Perhaps, by discussing with them the whole problem, the teacher can help students evaluate the moral aspects of cheating. He might show the discussion film, *Cheating* (Young America Films). By knowing his students so well that he can tell when the work of each one deviates markedly from what can be expected, the teacher also makes cheating impossible.

The time may come when, because of smaller classes, better means of motivation, and a stronger moral climate, cheating will be as outdated as the birch rod. But until that time comes, the teacher needs to be alert so that he is not encouraging and rewarding cheating by his own poor management and instructional procedures.

SUMMARY

Finding out how much students have learned from classroom activities and learning experiences is a major task for every teacher. Most evaluation is conducted through tests made by teachers themselves. It is highly important that teacher-made tests be carefully formulated in terms of the purposes of instruction.

Available to the teacher also is a variety of standardized tests. These tests are valuable for comparing the growth and achievement of the teacher's own students with that of others across the nation who are studying similar problems. From standardized tests and from

a number of research projects, new developments in the construction of tests are emerging. Classroom teachers should be aware of these promising devices for measuring student learning.

Of course, even with the best of tests, the administration of the test is only the beginning. A test is an important classroom activity. The teacher can make it either a valuable learning situation or a source of anxiety and frustration.

Making and using tests and examinations requires many teacher hours. A good testing program is vital to the success of the total teaching function. In this chapter one element in the evaluation program was considered; in the next chapter we will discuss the very important question of grades and grading.

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Grading and Reporting Student Progress

GRADING IS THE MOST disliked task in teaching. Nobody is satisfied with the system. Everybody wants some kind of a change. But hardly anybody knows what kind. Some teachers want only slight modifications of the usual A-B-C-D system. Others plead for more extensive adjustments to individual ability. More and more are suggesting increased use of parent conferences. *You* have had years of experience as a student being graded by teachers. Where do you stand?

The Grading Process in Action

Every teacher is involved in the grading process. The high schools of today insist on a semester, term, and year grade for every student in every class. The beginning teacher needs to develop an understanding of the place of grades in the total evaluation process so that he can intelligently adapt himself to different ways of mark-

ing and grading students. For whatever the variations in practice, the problems, issues, and challenges in evaluation persist.

The grade is often based on a limited measure of learning. It is meaningful to those students who want a "good" grade and are able to do those academic tasks in which schools have long specialized. If all of the work in a given class is evaluated through tests on detailed information, students who can memorize will obviously get a high grade. And students who cannot memorize detailed information will get poor grades. When this happens often enough, these "poor" students either refuse to take the test or make only a passing gesture. When asked why, they will reply, "Well, we only get D's or F's anyway."

The grade causes the student to regard the teacher, by and large, as a judge, one who hands down a sentence of "Success" or "Failure." Most of the time the student develops a feeling of helplessness. When asked how he did on a test, the average student will probably reply, "I don't know—I'll have to wait until I get my paper back." In other words, the whole process of grading seems a deep, dark mystery, and the teacher is the only person who has the clues.

When such a condition exists, the student obviously cannot learn a major lesson for competent adult living—namely, to appraise accurately his own achievement. So we hear students remark, "Why, I know I did a very good job on that report; I don't see why I only got a C," or "I certainly was surprised when I got an A on that paper—I hardly spent any time on it, and personally I didn't think it was very good," or "No matter how hard you try in Mr. Albert's class, you just can't get more than a B." No wonder many students never know what good workmanship means—they have never had to judge their own work. They have merely handed it in to a teacher, who passed on it in some mysterious fashion and handed down his dictum, "Good," or "Bad."

The Myth of the Absolute Standard

In some never-never land teachers may be able to judge *absolutely* whether students merit 40% or 57% or 100%. Or "D"

or "C—" or "B+". It would be most convenient if we could be that confident of the meaning of a grade. But research and experience show us that an "A" to one teacher may be a "C" to another. And who can determine the validity of the judgment, "This is perfect"? To illustrate:

Mr. Jones corrected his set of math papers. He did not find many perfect papers. However, there were a few. Some of his students had managed to get all the answers. "I don't grade them on neatness—after all, I'm not a nursemaid," he said.

Mrs. Smith was burning the midnight oil. The math papers before her were a real problem. Here was Bill. All his answers were correct. She would expect this; his father was an engineer and drilled Bill nightly on mathematics. But what a mess his paper was! Someone should tell Bill mere ability to get the right answer was not the only thing to be sought. She marked his examples as correct, but took off a half grade because his paper was so very untidy.

Mr. Black was grading math papers. He required the students to show every process by which they arrived at the answer. Now here was Jane. It was astonishing. She never seemed to get the right answer, but she did know the right process. It was always a matter of simple arithmetic. Actually, she was skilled in solving problems; but somewhere she had been deficient in the simple combinations. How could he grade her down? Someday she would excel all of them. He felt he must put an "A" after her name because she had shown a real flash of brilliance in working out an original solution to a complex equation. But what was he going to do about her arithmetic?

Yes, even in mathematics, the most "exact" of all subjects, we find considerable variation among teachers. Where the teacher is absorbed in obtaining the right *answer*, there is very little opportunity for students to experience the right *process*. If mathematics can develop logical methods of problem solving and science can develop a reliance on scientific method for arriving at solutions, then we must focus on the *way* we get in and out of a problem. Too often, the overemphasis on the one correct answer encourages lazy thinking, cheating, and merely mechanical manipulation of arbitrary and meaningless symbols. We should reward accuracy, but we should not exalt this one skill above the real and important other skills that science and mathematics can develop.

Many teachers do look for "objective" measures to assist in

determining grades. But no matter how "objective" a device may appear, the human equation cannot be completely eliminated. The individual teacher's own judgment includes one factor and excludes another even in an objective test. It is a matter of individual decision, for example, whether spelling will be counted in a completion examination—which, on the surface, appears completely objective.

This seems very discouraging. On what basis can teachers grade? Students need an indication of their progress, and parents are usually vitally concerned. As yet, we have already admitted, there is no entirely satisfactory answer. There are many ways of grading and evaluating pupils. There are some ways that are superior to others. The point to be made here is that you must take a close look at the fallacy of the absolute standard. Then you may be ready to consider the ways and means of protecting, supporting, and helping the student through an evaluation process that is built into all high school teaching and learning.

Discrimination in Grading

Studies show rather conclusively that girls get higher school marks and grades than boys, though boys have average IQ scores similar to, if not higher than, those of girls. One study in Cleveland revealed that boys had a statistically significant greater rate of failure than girls; the chance that boys would fail was $2\frac{1}{4}$ times that of girls. Both men and women teachers tended to give higher grades to girls. The study also showed that teachers who were considered poor teachers by their administrators tended to fail more students, especially more boys.¹ Another study revealed a similar trend; girls, because of the bias in grading, were consistently better able to get into the honor society than boys.² Still another investigator discovered that although girls excelled boys according to teachers'

¹ M. C. Schinnerer, "Failure Ratio: 2 Boys to 1 Girl," *Clearing House*, 18:264-270, January 1944.

² Clifford Swenson, "Packing the Honor Society," *Clearing House*, 16:521-524, May 1942; "The Girls Are Teacher's Pets," *Clearing House*, 17:537-540, May, 1943.

marks, boys excelled girls by almost the same percentage when an achievement-test score and an IQ score were used as the base.³

These studies reveal a pitfall for every teacher. The need to grade means that teachers will undoubtedly be influenced by personal factors that have nothing to do with the actual achievement of boys and girls. It has been suggested that girls mature earlier in the social graces, are more compliant, are more likely to be neat and clean. "But behold the boy! Awkward, uncoordinated, loud, untidy, he suffers seriously in any classroom group by comparison with his sisters."⁴

A similar kind of discrimination often operates against students from minority groups and those associated with low socioeconomic levels. A well-documented study of a typical midwestern community revealed that children from the lowest social class were given most of the low grades and had most of the failures; whereas students from higher social class groups had no extremely low grades and hardly any failures.⁵ And this in the face of data that showed that IQ scores were not unduly weighted toward the top. "Although intelligence was associated significantly with class position, the degree of association was not high enough to account for the concentration of failures" in the lowest socioeconomic group.⁶

The influence of stereotyped thinking on the teacher's evaluations is thus highly significant. The beginning teacher would do well to understand such unconscious biases and seek to counteract them through adequate evaluation procedures. It would be worth while for a teacher to do some self-research in this area at the end of each year. "Am I giving most of my good grades or marks to girls, to children from the better homes, to those from predominantly Anglo-Saxon groups?" In addition, the teacher will want to ask, "Is the poor grade associated with actual lack of achievement in the subject, or are the students being penalized for being boys, or for being poor, or for being from a minority group?"

Evaluations of growth in learning must be measures of what

³ George Johnson, "Girls Lead in Progress through: School," *American School Board Journal*, 95:23-26, October 1937.

⁴ Dean Lobaugh, "Girls and Grades—A Significant Factor in Evaluation," *School Science and Mathematics*, 47:763-767, April 1947.

⁵ August B. Hollingshead, *Elmtown's Youth* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1949), pp. 172-173.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 175.

the individual himself has accomplished. They must not be distorted by the teacher's feelings about groups to which the individual may belong. We must, however, guard against a tendency to think that if the brighter students, by and large, get the highest grades, then our grading must be all right. Some teachers carry this approach so far that they are convinced they can actually assign the end-of-term grade to every student at the beginning of the term, just on the basis of intelligence- and achievement-test scores. In such cases, learning and teaching are a travesty. If high school education is really to serve the needs of society, it is clear that students must all have an equal chance for a successful educational experience. Students who grow in social maturity, who learn new skills in cooperation, who are able to make progress toward directing their own affairs, must be recognized. It will do us no good as teachers to believe in educating all the children of all the people if we still persist in grading students on the assumption that only a chosen few may actually attain school success.

Grading and Student-Teacher Rapport

Probably the one aspect of grading that is most crucial and yet most ignored is the effect grading has on the relations between student and teacher. Teachers, by and large, would like to be friendly with their students, since it is more pleasant to teach those who like you and to feel in turn that you like those you teach. One of the prime requisites for teaching has always been a liking for young people. This presupposes that the liking will be reciprocated, that the students will like the teacher. Does this mutual liking occur? If it does, it may be distorted when the teacher must give the student a grade. A study of the fantasy life of adolescents showed that "teachers were almost always stern, threatening, and avenging figures—seldom was any affection shown by or for them."⁷ The teacher becomes a symbol of arbitrary judgment, one who can provide either reward—success and high grades, or punishment—failure and low

⁷ Percival M. Symonds, *Adolescent Fantasy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1949), p. 223.

grades. When the basis on which these grades are awarded is one that the students neither understand nor accept, it is difficult indeed for them to develop positive attitudes toward the giver of grades.

The whole elaborate cultural pattern of "apple-polishing" is most revealing. Sometimes students make quite a game of this, comparing notes on the appropriate technique to try on the teacher: "If you tell old so-and-so you think frogs are just fascinating, he'll give you a good grade." Or, "Never argue with that teacher about *Hamlet* because she flunks students who think *Hamlet* is dull." Probably most of us can remember now the pretty blonde who giggled so appreciatively at the professor seemed to get a grade completely out of proportion to what she seemed to know. However, the important point is that most students will violently reject anyone who consistently "apple-polishes." So it becomes very difficult indeed for a student to show genuine interest in the subject matter at hand or a genuine liking for the teacher.

How can the student who really likes English or who really thinks the math teacher is a "great guy" express his true feelings? His peer group sometimes ostracizes him if he appears to ally himself with teachers and school. We have seen how sometimes the studious, intelligent, interested student wanders alone throughout his high school career. It is this student who may turn to teachers completely for his school friendships, since those of his own age view him with mixed feelings of contempt and alarm. He is rejected because he actually seems to like learning, to like teachers. How very unfortunate! The same phenomenon may even be observed on some college and university campuses, where to be primarily interested in *ideas* is to be thought "a grind." It may well be that sometimes the grading process has made suspect the person interested in the importance of ideas.

Growth occurs only as we know to what degree and in what manner we have achieved goals important to us, in order that we may grow toward increasingly significant goals. But where evaluation is only a matter of the teacher's giving *grades* and *marks*, then learning is only for the grade. Students who get the "A" develop a feeling of superiority that may not be at all justified; students who get the "F" are given a destructive personal view of their capacity for learning. It has been found that most students who become de-

linquent have a long record of lack of school achievement. The feeling that school success can be measured only by a grade may be highly destructive to the ego-picture of those young people who cannot find success in this manner. When high school grades are geared to preparation for college, as in many cases they are, those students who have no hope of going on to higher education (70 per cent of the school population) must obtain a very negative view of their own potential as good people (not "A" quality, that is) and a suspicion and hatred for learning and those who symbolize learning.

Perhaps the whole blame for anti-intellectualism cannot be laid at the door of the grading process. Yet clearly grades do displace the goal of learning from achieving *knowledge* to achieving a *mark*. Although the grade is supposed to be a measure of knowledge, we know that all too often it is only a pleasant coincidence if this is true. And because a teacher *gives* grades, his whole relationship to students is distorted.

Effects of Present Grading Practices on Teachers

Teachers are deeply affected by the grading process. They are likely to develop a great fear of students' motives and distrust students who seem appreciative or interested. It is the rare teacher who does not at some time overhear a cynical remark and realize with chagrin and anger that he, the teacher, has been "played for a sucker." What happens then? The teacher in turn builds barriers between himself and the students by freezing with suspicion whenever a student makes friendly overtures. After all, the teacher's main function in the life of the student is to induce him to work hard at learning. When the principal emphasis is on grades and not on learning, the student's main function in life becomes one of seeming to learn without having to go through all the agony—to escape failure at all costs. The battle over grades, then, becomes a fierce and unyielding struggle, in which the students attempt to outwit the teacher and the teacher seeks constantly to anticipate the students.

When students do have successful and important experiences in a classroom, they will of course develop considerable attachment for the teacher. Yet nothing can destroy a long and rewarding friendship more quickly than a poor report mark from a "friend." In fact the better we know our students, the harder it is to give them low grades. We as teachers feel guilty, feel that we have betrayed a trust, that we have done something behind the back of a friend who believed in us. This kind of situation produces great ambivalence in both student and teacher. Some teachers escape the problem entirely. One teacher may insist that any student who attends class regularly and is not too unruly will get a "B." This teacher cannot stand to hurt, through grades, the students whom he so genuinely likes. Another teacher may become so cold and distant and unapproachable that students are barely more than names and faces. Then it does not hurt to flunk anyone.

It often comes as something of a shock to the new teacher to realize what a central position grading takes in the teaching process. So much of education for teaching has been concerned with content, with the organization of materials, with consideration of the learning process. So very little time has been spent on an element that is psychologically so critical—that of giving and receiving grades. And because this aspect of teaching has received so little attention, it has remained essentially stationary for over fifty years.

The beginning teacher finds himself in a situation where pressures are fierce and contradictory. On the one hand, he needs to grade "hard" enough so that students won't "take advantage of him" and think he is too "easy." And, of course, his grading reputation will soon reach the ears of his colleagues, who may accord him more respect if he is a "hard" grader, able to resist student and parent pressure. Then, on the other hand, he knows full well that given a certain amount of intellectual equipment, a student may put out every ounce of effort at his command and still barely learn. Does this student deserve a failing grade? The teacher is even more painfully and acutely aware of the very able students who so easily achieve an "A" grade and barely tax their intellectual capacities. How can he honestly evaluate the performance of both these groups with the grading system accepted in most of our secondary schools today?

Grading and Student-Student Relations

What does the grading system do to the interpersonal relations among students? As previously mentioned, students who express interest in class work are sometimes derided as "apple-polishers." The competition for a limited number of rewards further divides the students. Since it is clear that, in the usual class, only a few will get the top grades, students may develop strong hostilities; after all, their neighbor might win the coveted award from them. Some students develop a great selfishness regarding their own knowledge. They hesitate to help a fellow student, because that would reduce their own chances at the top grade. Among the students at the bottom of the heap, the reverse is true. Since they are sure that they will not get anything but a low grade, they have no moral compulsions about cheating; to them, this is merely sharing and helping a fellow unfortunate escape the ultimate disaster of failure. Where the normal curve is used in distributing grades, dooming a large number of students to failure, near-failure, or mediocre success, the teacher may find cheating and exchange of work very common. And why not? Or so the student reasons in the face of a system that seems to him completely arbitrary. He feels compelled by force of circumstance to get the grade.

Overcoming the Grading Complex

What can be done to overcome the grading complex? The beginning teacher has a responsibility to try to extend the conventional grade to a more adequate appraisal. Where can he turn for ideas? One place where some changes have been made is in the elementary school. Of course, there is, traditionally, a wide gulf between the secondary school and the elementary school. Yet practices that are sensible at the lower level may also make sense when adapted for an older group. The traditional report card is less likely to be used at earlier grade levels. Frequently we see "narrative" report cards, in which the teacher several times during the year writes at length about the progress of the individual child. The parent may be asked to make a written reply, which consists of more than a mere

signature. Teacher-parent conferences are also an essential part of the reporting system. During these conferences parents sit down with the teacher and go over the work of their child. Ideally, the parent is able to inform the teacher about home conditions or relationships that may be significant, and in turn the teacher tells the parent all he can about the child's school behavior: what he learns, how he learns, how he plays and works with other children; his talents, strengths, weaknesses, areas for special attention. From such a reporting system can come—and often does come—a genuinely cooperative effort between school and home to enable a given child to grow according to his own best pattern.⁸

The junior and senior high schools have not yet reached this understanding in reporting to parents. The problem is admittedly more difficult because each teacher has many students—sometimes as many as two hundred—and thus can hardly write narrative accounts about each one. But perhaps the hard fact is that the problem itself has never been scrutinized closely. There is no “built-in” system of regular and extensive communication with parents of adolescents. At a time when parents find it most difficult to communicate with their children, when these children tell them least about the significant things that are occurring, the school is also least helpful.

We cannot resolve the problem here. We can, however, indicate that practices are changing in other parts of the school system. Some day the junior and senior high schools may examine current grading and reporting practices comprehensively and produce a far more adequate program. Those of you now entering teaching may have, then, a crucial voice in determining the direction and scope of such a change. We can only suggest in these few pages some of the hazards to genuine intellectual effort that exist because of the present grading system and its complete inadequacy in reporting to parents.

For the present, the beginning teacher in the secondary school can experiment with some modest changes in the system. Here are a few suggestions:

Discuss the grading-marking system with students. The teacher will find that several class hours spent in discussing grades every semester with every new class will aid immeasurably in bridging this

⁸ R. Murray Thomas, *Judging Student Progress* (New York: Longmans, Green, and Company, 1954).

gap between teacher and student. The teacher will want to explain carefully the limits under which he works: for example, in college preparatory courses he must make clear the grades required for college admission.

Provide for variety of achievement. Every course of instruction has a multitude of possible and important purposes. After being in a mathematics class for a semester, the student should not only have attained some skill in solving problems, but should have developed ability to draw graphs and charts, write neatly, discuss intelligently, work cooperatively, be responsible for aspects of class management, and so forth. Thus, a student may have more than one avenue to classroom success.

Develop self-evaluation tools. Here the teacher can give students a technique for looking at their own achievement. A report form should be developed jointly by the teacher and the class or by a class committee for the various phases or units of work. A sample of one such form is given on pages 506-507.

This form, when completed by the student, should be kept by the teacher in a folder for the student. The teacher should use it to check his own judgment of the student, and, where teacher and student disagree drastically, use it as a basis for a personal conference. If the student indicates significant problems and weaknesses, the teacher can easily discuss these with him.

Develop new evaluation techniques. When a teacher gives the same kind of test all of the time—objective, essay, matching, problem-solving—then only students proficient in that kind of skill or in learning material that can be fitted into such a test will be able to do well on the test. This will discourage those who are unable to do that kind of task well and will not challenge those who always succeed. Furthermore, it will encourage cheating, since the student is given only one way to success.

Allow students to share in evaluating one another. An evaluation committee with constantly rotating membership may be a great asset to a teacher. The students then act in an advisory capacity in judging the quality of their own work. For example, it has been found very rewarding for small groups of students—three or four—to read and evaluate one another's papers. One teacher in a ninth-grade orientation course had the students read their papers in small groups and then select the best one of the three or four read. After

several periods of this kind of evaluation, students who had never written a decent paper or report were more conscientious in getting their papers done. The larger the role of the student in the evaluation program, the more effective the total learning will be. The students will develop ability to appraise and discriminate and set their own standards and goals for achievement. Teachers can find innumerable situations in the classroom in which students may be active in the evaluation of learning. Some additional suggestions follow:

1. *Textbook reading assignments.* Instead of pointing textbook reading toward class discussion only, students may be asked to prepare some questions on the pages of text that could be used for a quiz on that section. The questions might be part of a classroom review game (see Chapter 11, section on games). The teacher should help the students understand what makes a good question by asking them to look at the information needed to answer the question. "Is that important for us to know?" would be the recurrent challenge posed by the teacher. A student committee might be asked to screen the questions for either a review game or a quiz; the students might be asked to indicate what they considered the correct answer to each question; and a team of experts from the class might appraise the judgment of the students, with final over-all review by the teacher.

2. *Student presentations.* Whenever a group of students or individual students present material to the class as a whole, they should be requested to prepare a few questions that the class should be able to answer after the material has been presented. The students responsible for the presentation might be asked to grade the answers of the class as a way of self-evaluation. They would then know to what extent they had succeeded in teaching the material.

Students should also be drawn into the evaluation of one another's performance. After standards for a good panel discussion have been agreed on, for example, the members of the class may be asked to fill out a simple form giving their reaction to the presentation:

Was the panel discussion interesting?

Were the points clearly made?

Were charts, graphs, or other displays understandable?

Did the panel demonstrate good speaking skills?

STUDENT SELF-EVALUATION CHART

AM I GROWING?⁹

In order to find out how much I am growing this year, I am keeping this chart. In the first column I have indicated those things with an N that I need help in very much and with an A those I need help in moderately.

In each of the following I have checked with:

X, if I have improved since the last time

O, if I have remained about the same

—, if I have lost ground

1. Extent to which I am growing in my ability to assume responsibility

Date

- a. By regular class attendance
- b. By having all necessary materials such as pen, pencils, notebooks, ready to carry on work
- c. By voluntarily meeting my obligations for work which I have missed
- d. By not missing class the day a specific piece of work is due
- e. By doing what I have agreed to do
- f. By volunteering things for the class benefit not required in the plan of work
- g. By doing things on my own rather than depending on the help of others

⁹ "Instruction in Citizenship in California High Schools," *Bulletin of the California State Department of Education*, Vol. X, No. 11, December 1941, p. 41.

What was the panel's outstanding contribution to the class? What suggestions for future panels do you think should be made?

This or another list of questions will help focus student attention on developing better skills as well as learning content.

If committees or individual students take responsibility for bulletin board displays, the same procedures may be followed. Those preparing the displays might be asked to hand in some questions students would be able to answer if the bulletin board attracted their attention. These questions, when asked of the class, will indicate how well the bulletin board did its job of teaching. The class might be asked to evaluate several displays for effectiveness, interest, clarity, originality, timeliness, taste, appeal. An evaluation committee might check the displays in terms of a list of criteria agreed on by the class. Or, a few moments might be provided at the end of the week for each member of the class to check such a list. The results would be used by the students or committees putting up the bulletin board to discover how others judged their efforts.

3. *Group evaluation procedures.* Where a group makes a presentation, prepares a test question, and then grades this question as a group, a more serious interest in the whole process of learning and teaching will be found. The students develop a greater appreciation of the task the teacher faces, and they also learn to differentiate between giving back information and learning something important. If the class has been divided into committees, all of which impart some knowledge to the class, then the examination on the total unit of work might well be a group examination. Students may read their individual papers and reports in small groups of three or four, and make notes on the quality of the reports or select the best one for posting on the bulletin board.

Where classmates evaluate one another, particularly in a test situation, it is sometimes useful to have students put numbers instead of names on their papers in order to maintain some objectivity on the part of the graders. It is probably more effective to use groups in grading papers than to have individuals grade individual papers, since the group situation will prevent any collusion between the grader and the one whose paper he is grading. Teachers often have students grade one another's papers when the answers (as in a true-

false test) are clear and unambiguous. However, this procedure may waste more time than is warranted. A committee of two or three could do it equally well. Membership on the evaluation committee should be rotated frequently in some arbitrary manner to widen the extent of class participation and class support for this procedure.

Plan for a conference period with each student to appraise his progress. Such conferences are highly valuable if held early enough in the semester so that the student may have time to improve. And a conference at the end of the semester regarding the final semester grade will help the student accept realistically the teacher's appraisal of his work and fit it into his own self-appraisal. Keeping folders in which students file their work throughout the semester is very helpful. Student and teacher together can then look over several months' work. This method enables the teacher to base his final grade on growth, rather than on an average on noncomparable periods of work.

These suggestions for overcoming some of the limitations of the grading process assume several operating principles. *First*, grading is no longer the teacher's sole responsibility but becomes a joint endeavor, in which the student takes an important part. *Second*, it is assumed that each student *can* learn, can use his best talents, and can assess his own ability and effort. *Third*, the actual achievement of students is considered far more significant than the grade that is stamped upon it. *Fourth*, continued teacher-student contact—many individual conferences, time spent on joint appraisal of progress, and cooperative planning of programs—is accepted as necessary.

To Fail or Not to Fail

"When am I justified in failing a student?" one student teacher asked at the end of her student-teaching experience. "This was the situation: It was a Home Ec class, and this girl just couldn't learn to thread a sewing machine. It isn't really a very difficult task, but all the evidence we had showed that she just didn't have the mental capacity to learn this simple mechanical operation. She tried; she tried very hard. But someone always had to untangle it for her. She could sew a little once the machine was threaded. I gave her a 'D'"

for the unit of work I was teaching, which included this aspect. But how could she get a passing grade for the course? She certainly had failed the major part of the sewing course. Fortunately, I didn't have to make that decision, since my student teaching was over before the final grades were determined."

What would you do? First, of course, you would have to ascertain the school policy regarding the failure of students, or non-promotion. In some schools a student may get a failing grade in a single course and not have to repeat the course. If the course is required for graduation, then failure may well involve repeating the same course. If this is true, does the student have to repeat it with the same teacher? If failure means repeating the same course with the same teacher, then you may well question the outcome. If failure is a direct result of actual lack of ability, certainly little or nothing is gained by repeating the course. In rare instances, failure may bring an otherwise irresponsible adolescent face to face with reality.

Research and observation indicate, however, that often neither the threat of failure nor actual failure makes much difference. Repeating a course does not always promote learning that did not take place the first time. It may, however, result in a feeling of complete incompetence and a lively hatred of school and all it signifies.

Unfortunately, many adults seem to think that they were motivated to success through fear of failure. Perhaps—but we are not always sure at what cost. There is impressive evidence that a far more reliable motivation toward further success is success in the first place; it is success that engenders more success.

But shouldn't individuals face failure sooner or later? Isn't this what "real life" is all about? Yes—and no. Security in the self is so basic to adequacy in all endeavours that schools must foster it. Certainly such a sense of competence must be honestly won; that is, John can't be convinced that he is as good a baseball player as Bill when he can see himself outdistanced by every available measure. But the concomitant of "not a good baseball player" is not that John is not a good person. John may indeed be very able, but not in baseball. Yet, in our classrooms, we subject the Johns to competition with the Bills in all kinds of situations. Is it fair to force Bill, the good baseball player, to compete with John, the genius in the auto-

mechanics course, where Bill is all thumbs? Certainly "real life" is kinder than the classroom. In "real life" we compete almost wholly with our peers, with those who have some degree of skill in the same areas where we are working. We usually do not continue to compete in fields where we know we are not at all able. *You* would be considered very foolish if you tried to be a professional athlete when you had no obvious talent, or an auto mechanic when you were extremely awkward. You seek that field in which you have a chance of being successful. Yet the school may put all of these diverse talents into many of the same courses and set all essentially the same tasks. This seems to us a far cry from the competition to be faced in later life. Our feeling is that this kind of classroom competition is really poor preparation for success in "real-life" competition. So far, we can't prove it. But is it not your task, nevertheless, to minimize the potentially hazardous impact of unfair competition and assist students to compete with those who are their peers? Should not the school engender a genuine respect among all kinds of students for all kinds of talent?

You see the dilemma you face in deciding whether or not to fail a student; it is not a simple problem with a simple answer. Our analysis suggests that the answer currently given in the secondary schools is inadequate. It is our hope that you will try to counter its more obvious shortcomings.

Reporting to Parents

It has already been suggested that, except for the single grade on a report card, the teacher in most high schools has no established method for communicating with parents. Ways of working with parents are suggested in Chapter 21; here we would like to touch briefly on the parental contacts that are part of the grading-reporting system.

Report cards are issued quarterly in some schools, twice a year, at the end of each semester, in others. Some schools still adhere to a percentage system—that is, each student's report card lists the subjects he takes, followed by a percentage grade: History, 65%;

English, 90%; Algebra, 83%; French, 87%. Where the percentage system is used, the school usually has a general agreement on what the percentages indicate. Students receiving 70% or above, for example, will be passing in the course, while those receiving less will be failing in the course. Scores over 90% will indicate superior performance, and so forth.

The system that has come into somewhat more common use today is that based on five letter grades: A, superior; B, good; C, average performance; D, poor performance; and E, or F, failing. This is translated into an eight-point scale by many schools with the addition of plus or minus to all of the letters except F. A few schools have adopted a three-point system: H for honors; S for satisfactory; and U for unsatisfactory, or failing. This may be reduced further to two marks, S and U. Some schools recognize the other learnings, of which we have spoken earlier, with a separate citizenship grade or with a number of grades for various attitudes and behaviors. There is, then, wide variation among the nation's schools in the kinds of grades assigned. Students who transfer from one school to another sometimes find it difficult to explain just where they are in their work or what level of achievement was reached.

Any system of grading and marking is in part justified, say its defenders, because the marks on a report card are easily entered by a teacher and are easily understood by the parent. A teacher arrives at a summary mark for a student, and puts it in the appropriate box on a report card. This is recorded by the school office staff, and the report card is taken home to the parent. The real purpose of the report card is to indicate to the parent the progress of the student; the question to raise, therefore, is, Does the report card actually do this? As one observer has said, "The mark is inadequate in conveying information to the student, his parents and others regarding the progress, achievement, failure, or success of the student."¹⁰

A study of the school problems of a group of junior Hi-Y boys in Akron, Ohio, showed that 17 per cent of the students reported that they did not like to take home their report cards.¹¹ The student

¹⁰ William L. Wrinkle, "Six Years of an Experiment in Marking and Reporting in the Secondary School of the Colorado State College of Education," chapter vii in *Guidance in Public Secondary Schools*, Educational Records Bulletin No. 28, October 1939 (437 W. 59 St., New York).

¹¹ William D. Stuber, "The Personal Problems of Jr. Hi-Y Members," Jr. Hi-Y Ways, April 1950, p. 1.

is involved in translating to his parents the meaning of the school marks on his report card. The typical conversation at home may sound like this:

FATHER: *What is this, a B- in History? How come you didn't get an A? I thought you liked History.*

JUNIOR: *Well, History is O.K., but you see I got an A and a C- in a test, so I think my average wasn't so good.*

FATHER: *Well, you ought to get a better grade than that. Remember, a B- isn't going to get you into college.*

The report card effectually obscures the real purposes of education. In the Eight-Year Study it was found that the school marks had directed the attention of students, parents, and teachers toward the symbol of success, the grade, rather than the actual learning or growth that the mark supposedly represented.¹²

The average teacher, with four or five classes a day and thirty to thirty-five students in each, cannot conceivably make very many individual contacts with each parent, whether through visits, phone calls, or letters. However, during the course of a semester or a year, the teacher might well arrange at least one such contact with each parent. When students need special attention, a home visit is helpful (see Chapter 21, section on relations with parents). For students who are progressing at a normal rate, a note or a telephone call will help bring the parent to a better understanding of his child and his child's progress in school. Such notes and telephone calls should include:

An indication of the teacher's genuine interest in the student and his progress.

An expression of understanding of problems that may interfere with optimal achievement.

A willingness to work with the parents toward the goals the parent has for his child. Where parents' goals are unrealistic in terms of the student's actual ability, the teacher may sometimes be able to discuss this problem with the parent and produce evidence that supports his insight. Obviously, this takes tact.

Specific statements about areas in which the student has shown genuine progress; specific suggestions about ways in which the student may need to do further work with the aid of his parents.

¹² Eugene R. Smith and Ralph W. Tyler, *Appraising and Recording Student Progress* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1942), p. 489.

In an earlier chapter we discussed the problems of slow and fast learners. One problem not covered in the earlier discussion concerns grading and reporting. Parents learn fairly quickly about Bob when he is in trouble because of misbehavior, or when he is failing a course. But how many parents hear from a teacher because Bob shows rare talent or promise in a particular field? Neglect of our gifted students is most apparent when we observe the fact that many parents of talented youngsters have no notion whatsoever that their child is capable of doing work beyond the average. Numerous instances are also on record of parents knowing of a child's interest but being either unsympathetic to or unaware of the talent that lies behind an "eccentric" hobby. Thus we have a special obligation to push our contact with parents—not only because it may make a difference personally, but also because of its potential wider social contribution.

SUMMARY

The task of finding out how well they are doing in their various educational enterprises confronts teachers and students at every turn. The teacher wants to know how well he is doing as a teacher in terms of increasing student insight and ability. He also wants to know how well individual students and groups of students are progressing. It is not an easy task to evaluate something as complex as educational growth. Typically, because it has been so difficult, we have concentrated our evaluation efforts on small, manageable units of information. Yet the significant purposes of education are far more comprehensive. Thus the modern teacher must seek new and more appropriate ways of evaluating learning. The approach to evaluation described in this chapter points a way of helping students grow toward important educational goals.

In this broader evaluation the psychological impact of the grading-report-card complex cannot be ignored. The greater his insight into this crucial area of teacher-student and student-student relationships, the better the teacher will be able to create a democratic classroom atmosphere. The larger the role given to students in the evaluation of their own progress, the greater the possibility that the teacher can develop in young people a sense of critical self-appraisal

independent of such extrinsic factors as marks and prizes. The best of teaching can be sabotaged by inadequate or inappropriate evaluation procedures. It is highly important that the beginning teacher see the intimate relationship between good teaching and adequate evaluation.

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Techniques of Individual Counseling

NO ONE IS MORE FASCINATING to an adolescent than himself. During these years he is concerned more exclusively with himself than he has ever been before or probably ever will be again. Commonly, the teacher of adolescents is confronted by a divided person. His attention is split between the objective world around him and the subjective world of his own worries, problems, hopes, and conflicts.

In the preceding sections our emphasis was on the modern approach to teaching in view of the differences among individuals. In this chapter, our emphasis is on the student as a person, not merely as a student. We see again that the role of the teacher has many facets. To be a competent teacher means more than developing good students. It means understanding the emotional life of young people and helping them to deal more successfully with their personal lives. This is the counseling function.

In all ages, those who were called "great teachers" were those who were wise and judicious advisers as well as skillful instructors. All of us are grateful for the existence of some person or persons who lend a sympathetic ear to our troubles, large and small. Too often

the high school teacher seems aloof and unsympathetic, a mere giver of assignments and grader of examinations. Few students seek out such a teacher for help and advice. Most schools are fortunate enough to have at least one teacher who is the confidant of many students. Not all of us can be great counselors, for this requires both special training and special personal qualities, but we can at least understand the obligation of the teacher to strive for insight. It has been said that we would have few, if any, delinquents if each student had one teacher in school who gave him warm friendship and understanding.

In this chapter we will discuss some of the tools and techniques the teacher can use in performing his function as a counselor to the individual student. Succeeding chapters will discuss the special problems of group guidance, vocational and academic counseling, and working with parents on guidance problems of students.

The Counseling Approach

It may be useful to point out the essential differences between the formal teacher and the teacher-counselor:

<i>Formal Teacher</i>	<i>Teacher-Counselor</i>
Evaluation is concerned with subject-matter learning only.	Evaluation reveals many kinds of achievement—intellectual, social, psychological, aesthetic.
Few personal interviews are held with students except about academic problems.	Many individual interviews are held about personal as well as academic problems.
The student's counselor or other teachers are seldom consulted about the progress of an individual.	Student problems are often discussed with counselors and other teachers.
Few home visits are made and parent conferences at school are avoided.	A number of home visits are made and special invitations are issued to individual parents to come to school for conferences.
The role of emotion in learning is discounted.	Sensitivity to emotional tone in the classroom and with individual students is maintained.

Certainly the contrast between these two kinds of teachers need not be so sharply drawn. Some teachers are clearly neither one nor the other. We have made the contrast this marked in order to emphasize the effects that the counseling approach to instruction may have on human relationships in the classroom. In discussing the democratic classroom (see Chapter 5), it was pointed out that the major concern in such a classroom is what happens to the individuals in it. Similarly, the counseling approach to teaching focuses on individuals in the group. For each student the important question is: Is he being helped to become as adequate an adult as he might be?

Diagnosing the Need for Guidance

In order to help young people with their problems, the teacher-counselor needs some tools and techniques that help to reveal these problems. Research indicates that adolescence is a time when the individual becomes more and more conscious of the differences between himself and others. The growth that occurs thus produces its own problems. What are the things that adolescents worry about?

In one study, the following concerns of adolescents were identified:

- 54 per cent say they wish they knew how to study more effectively.
- 40 per cent would like to know more definitely how they are doing in their work.
- 43 per cent say they worry about tests.
- 35 per cent say they worry about little things.
- 27 per cent report they are nervous.
- 26 per cent have guilt feelings about things they have done.
- 24 per cent say, "I want to discuss my personal problems with someone."
- 54 per cent say they want people to like them better.
- 50 per cent want to make new friends.
- 42 per cent wish they were more popular.
- 31 per cent say, "I'm worried about the next war."¹

¹ *Good Schools Don't Just Happen!* (Chicago: Science Research Associates, n.d.).

There are several check lists of student problems that may help the teacher familiarize himself with adolescent concerns. The Mooney Problems Check List, the Science Research Associates Youth Inventory, the check list entitled "High School Youth Look at Their Problems," by L. J. Elias (published by the author, the State College of Washington, Pullman, Washington) are among those currently in wide use. These lists cover approximately the same material. Typical statements to be checked by students are:

- I feel sleepy in class even when I've had enough sleep at night.
- I need some individual help with my courses.
- I often feel lonesome.
- I feel that I'm not as smart as other people.
- People stare at me.
- I want people to like me better.²

Each teacher may want to adapt these standard scales for his own use. Or he may assign certain central problems as theme topics. Many teachers find topics such as these very useful in eliciting guidance data:

1. What I do when I get mad.
2. What I do to get something from my parents that they can't afford.
3. What I do when someone makes fun of me.
4. What my family expects of me.³
5. What I remember of the time when I was a child.
6. The person I would most like to be.
7. My happiest (unhappiest) experience.
8. I wish . . .
9. The worst thing in the world . . .
10. The kind of boy (girl) I like best is . . .

Understanding Adolescents

In order to understand adolescents better, the beginning teacher may do well to review in his own mind the problems he himself faced

² From the Science Research Associates Youth Inventory, Form A (Chicago: Science Research Associates, n.d.).

³ For specific student reactions to items 1 to 4, see Elizabeth H. Brady, "Children Bring Their Families to School," chapter ii in *Fostering Mental Health in Our Schools*, 1950 Yearbook of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (Washington, D. C.: The Association, 1950).

as an adolescent. Adults tend to forget that the two worlds do not coincide; things of concern to the adult may be very remote to youth, while the events that appear crucial to youth often appear inconsequential or even childish to adults. "It is probably fair to say that more teachers are balked in their work with boys and girls because they unwittingly violate adolescents' unformulated codes of behavior than because they violate the laws of learning."⁴ To work daily with adolescents means to keep freshly in mind the reality of the world in which the adolescent is living. One of our great failures as teachers is that we seem so removed from the world of the adolescent, so unsympathetic to those matters of importance to youth, that young people seldom come to us with their real problems.

One method of coming closer to the young person, we said earlier, is to recall one's own adolescent problems and difficulties. Talking over these years with other young adults may help to widen the base of our experience and understanding. When we recall the problems we faced as high school students, it soon becomes apparent that many of them were very personal. We recall conflict at home, worries over physical maturation, insecurity in heterosexual relations, doubt about physical or intellectual competence. At the time, we thought that we alone had these insecure years. Now we know that every generation of adolescents undergoes the same period of worry and concern. Of course, we must not project onto others the same problems we had ourselves. After all, if the problem we faced in high school was the self-conscious awkwardness of a stranger in town, this does not necessarily mean that all other adolescents entering a new town feel the same way. No, we do not all have the same problems in adolescence. But what we can gain from remembered feelings is renewed sensitivity to a troubled time of life.

Once we have this feeling for adolescence, we can begin to broaden our perspective. We can accept the experiences of young people without being startled or shocked. Many teachers have lived relatively sheltered lives, yet they must meet and deal effectively with students from a very wide range of backgrounds. For example, if a teacher has never been near the chronic alcoholic, nor witnessed the family disruption and terror that go with alcoholism, then he

⁴ Ruth Fedder, *Guiding Homeroom and Club Activities* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1949), p. 54.

may shy away from the student who has such a problem to face at home. Or he may be unwilling to face the fact that a student comes from a family living in a one-room shanty with no running water. He may want to get away from such problems simply by decrying the way these people live. Obviously, this won't help much. Often creative writers have projected the feelings of youth better than educators and psychologists; their books will help teachers to visualize backgrounds that would otherwise be unfamiliar to them.⁵ Then, too, anthropologists have made a number of interesting studies of young people in other cultures, which throw new light on our own ways of doing things.⁶ Other social scientists have written biting commentaries on the American scene, and although we may not agree with all they have to say, nevertheless their insights put new life into familiar surroundings and jolt us to a sharper vision of the world around us.⁷ Although it is especially useful to read such commentaries now, early in your teaching career, it is equally important later to keep in touch with what is being written about the American scene. Teachers, more than most others, must keep abreast of what changing circumstances mean to those who are growing up. After all, the fact that "no one did that when I was a girl" does not mean that it is not accepted fashion now. The mores and attitudes of individuals

⁵ The following books are recommended: Willa Cather, *My Antonia* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1924); A. J. Cronin, *The Green Years* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1944); Theodore Dreiser, *An American Tragedy* (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1925); James T. Farrell, *Studs Lonigan* (New York: Vanguard Press, 1935); Beatrice Griffith, *American Me* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1948); Carson McCullers, *The Member of the Wedding* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1946); Thomas Mann, *Buddenbrooks* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1924); Alberto Moravia, *Two Adolescents* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Young, 1950); Willard Motley, *Knock on Any Door* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1947); Eugene O'Neill, *Ah, Wilderness!* (New York: Random House, 1933). For additional references see *Reading Ladders in Human Relations*, rev. ed. (Washington, D. C.: American Council on Education, 1953), and James H. Dodds, et al., "Bibliography of Fiction about Adolescents," *Progressive Education*, 31:233-237, May 1954.

⁶ See, for example, Margaret Mead, *From the South Seas*, *Studies of Adolescence and Sex in Primitive Societies* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1939); *Male and Female* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1949).

⁷ See, for example, Geoffrey Gorer, *The American People* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1948); Karen Horney, *The Neurotic Personality of Our Time* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1937); David Riesman, *The Lonely Crowd* (Yale University Press, 1950); James West, *Plainville, USA* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1945).

in the modern world undergo very rapid change, and the teacher, dealing with the young year after year, must be particularly sensitive to changing patterns.

Collecting Personnel Information Preparatory to Counseling

Good counseling assumes knowledge of individuals. But if the high school teacher has five classes a day, with a minimum of thirty students per class, there are 150 students to get to know each semester, perhaps as many as 300 a year. Now this seems like a staggering number, and indeed it is. Many teachers feel satisfied if they know the names of all their students and know something about a fraction of them. But to know them all intimately is just too much. Yet it has been suggested that one of the reasons so many students do not like high school, and even drop out of school before they should, is that they feel completely overlooked as individuals.⁸

What is the solution? Some schools give a teacher a class for a two-hour period of time to assist in this process of getting to know the students. Other schools arrange for the teacher to review the cumulative records of all those assigned to his classes before the school year starts (though making even the briefest notes on 150 folders is no easy task). Moreover, teachers may consult school counselors to share the data they have collected on the students. Of course, the counselors may not have full information about all students, but at least they can offer expert assistance to the teacher on the problems of particularly difficult students. The teacher probably must depend largely on his own resources for observation and analysis, especially in the case of the "normal" students—those who are not especially brilliant, not significantly slow, not particularly outstanding—those who may get lost in the shuffle because they are so average.

We suggest that the teacher develop early in his career the habit

⁸ Arthur T. Jersild and R. J. Tasch, *Children's Interests and What They Suggest for Education* (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1949), pp. 76 ff.

of keeping a personnel file of his own. A small loose-leaf binder or a file drawer that holds medium-sized cards would be sufficient for a quick orientation to a new group of students. We recommend a form such as the following, which is easily duplicated:

Name	Age
Special physical characteristics (i.e., too tall, short, fat, etc.)	
Father's, mother's, occupations:	
Test data: (IQ, Achievement, etc.)	
School record:	
Comments:	

This brief form can be filled in by the teacher easily and quickly from the office records and will give him a start in learning about his class. If the cumulative records indicate special abilities or disabilities, interests, and so on, then these have a place in the teacher's own file. As he gets acquainted with the class, he will want to jot down additional notes on student problems—things for him to watch in dealing with the student and his friends and school activities. As the teacher gets to know his class, he may not need to keep his file up to date, but such a file, started at the beginning of each semester, will go a long way in helping him take the guidance approach to his students. He will know them as individuals, with special family backgrounds, special interests, talents, difficulties. Remember, too, that a careful inquiry among other teachers may help to fill in the blank spots.

In the first few days of establishing rapport with the class, a rich prior acquaintance with the students as individuals will help immeasurably. Knowing the student's likes and dislikes beforehand permits one to establish rapport with him with surprising ease and

at the same time enables one to see a deeper meaning in even the casual remarks of the chatting youngster.

The Case Study

There is one especially good way in which teachers can learn about students in order to teach them. This is the *case study approach*, in which not only the present status of a student is considered but also his personal history and the probable developments in the future. On these three levels—past, present, future—information may be collected about the composition of the family, its socioeconomic status, and its social relationships; the qualities of the individual's personality, his status within the family and among his peers; the facts of individual growth and development, the individual's maturity compared to neighborhood playmates and school classmates; the record of health and hygiene; the profile of in- and out-of-school aptitudes, interests, and achievements.

Why make a case study of a student? It takes considerable time and labor, and many teachers wonder whether it is worth it. But for a new teacher the case study is an excellent device for becoming informed about the whys and wherefores of problem students. By this means, he can often find a reason for behavior that is otherwise quite baffling, and, having a reason, he is better able to work with the problem student in class. One or two case studies a year are a good guarantee of continuing awareness of the real-life situations of young people.

A simple duplicated form may be set up, with key data-seeking questions. Suppose we illustrate in just two areas of investigation:

Family:

Where does the student live? Is the house on a par with those of his classmates? Does he have a room of his own? Does he live with his own father and mother?

Do both mother and father work? What do they do? How long has the father held his present job?

Are there brothers and sisters? Do they live at home? What is his age in relation to them? If employed, what do they do?

What aspirations do father and mother have for their children? With whom does the family associate? What does the family do in its social associations? Are cultural interests encouraged; literature, drama, music, art?

Individual personality:

Do home, school, or youth groups to which he may belong report how he meets or evades his problems? Do they report frequent outbursts of rage or grief? Do they report aggressiveness, submissiveness, shyness, fearfulness? What do they report about strong likes, dislikes, persistent fantasies?

Does he have responsibilities in the family? Do the parents have decided ideas about his vocation? Does he agree? How do they feel about his abilities in comparison with his brothers and sisters? How does he feel about this comparison?

How many friends does he have in and out of school? How do they feel about him? What kind of gang does he belong to? What are his leisure-time activities? What are his after-school or vacation jobs? How many hours a day does he work? Pay? What does he do with his money? What do his employers report about him? Does he like the job? Will the job help him make vocational decisions?

Obviously, gathering information in such intimate detail calls for great tact. Neither parents nor students welcome any suggestion of snooping. Much of the data cannot be gathered by direct questioning, but only through patient, permissive interviews, in which the information eventually tumbles out. It is often difficult to avoid predisposition so that only wanted data are heard, or, at least, unwanted data are modified as they are recorded. Attitudes of censure and evidence of disapproval of accepted ways of living at a given social level, of course, quickly lead either to rejection of the interviewer or to cessation of the flow of information.

Interpreting Case Study Findings

Once the data are gathered, the task of interpretation begins. What does all this mean, anyway? What possible lines of action can be suggested? What sense can be made of these observations, interview materials, anecdotal records? The teacher needs a framework

around which to group the data he has collected so that areas of disturbance, of need, or of conflict may be clearly discerned. A useful outline has been suggested by Prescott:

1. Organic factors that influence growth, development, and behavior:
 - a. Health: disease history, corrected and uncorrected defects, nutrition, health habits.
 - b. Characteristic rate of energy output; quality of physical endurance and recovery from fatigue.
 - c. Growth history, present maturity level, and rate of growth.
 - d. Skill in managing body; physical attractiveness.
2. Relationships to others, social roles, and family status:
 - a. Social roles of family members in the community.
 - b. Interpersonal relations within the family, past and present.
 - c. Child's interaction and relations with peers.
 - d. Child's interaction and relations with adults outside the family.
3. The child as a developing individual:
 - a. Conceptions about physical and social processes; his attitudes toward them.
 - b. Conceptions of aesthetic and ethical principles; his attitudes toward them.
 - c. Skill in using symbols in thinking and communication.
 - d. Patterns of emotional behavior; situations that evoke them.
 - e. Common defense mechanisms.
 - f. Present adjustment problems.
 - g. Developmental history and present developmental tasks.
 - h. Basic evaluation of himself as a physical being, as an object of love, as a social being, and as an individual.
 - i. Values and aspirations.
4. Summary: the child's major assets and needs:
 - a. As a physical being.
 - b. As to personal relations with others.
 - c. As to social roles.
 - d. As to experience, knowledge, and skills.
 - e. As to attitudes, values, and aspirations.
 - f. As to his evaluation of himself.
 - g. In relation to his adjustment problems and developmental tasks.⁹

Sometimes, after trying to organize the data around such an outline, the teacher may find he has ignored or omitted certain

⁹ Commission on Teacher Education, *Helping Teachers Understand Children* (Washington, D. C.: American Council on Education, 1945), pp. 431-432.

important areas, which need to be filled in. Once these areas are covered, there emerges a well-rounded picture of the individual. Then the teacher can see more clearly where the possible centers of trouble may lie: Is it in his relationship to his peers? In his evaluation of himself? In his lack of adequate adjustment techniques? Although the answers to these questions will still be tentative and in the nature of hypotheses, future counseling assistance will at least proceed on a somewhat more substantial basis. The teacher should then know the individual well enough to be able to help the individual know himself. In first attempts at interpreting case studies, beginning teachers can often obtain the assistance of trained counselors and experienced teachers.

The real advantage of the case study is that it makes the individual teacher sensitive to the many factors that enter into the life pattern of any given youth. There is then less risk of making glib generalizations: "Students from that part of town are just lazy and good-for-nothing"; or, "Boys who are smaller than the average are always trying to compensate for their height." A periodic check of the kind of informal appraisal of personality in which teachers indulge every day is probably very healthy; the case study is an essential tool in making such a check.

As a teacher-counselor, then, the individual teacher will have a somewhat different attitude toward the problems that students bring to him. As was indicated in Chapter 15, *discipline* is only a convenient term for a way of handling certain kinds of problems—the surface ones, primarily. But when students have deeper, more personal kinds of problems, then the teacher must take a different point of view.¹⁰

Who Should Counsel Whom?

Logically, the question of who should counsel whom might have been one of the first raised in this whole area of counseling. Actually, only as teachers begin to face the real problems of their students

¹⁰ William Wattenberg, *The Adolescent Years* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1955), pp. 442-455.

does this nettlesome query arise: Am I the one who should consider *these* problems with *this* student? There is no clear-cut answer. In fact, there are many issues and problems still unresolved in this area. First, should teachers do any counseling? Second, if teachers (or counselors) accept the counseling responsibilities thrust upon them, should men and women take on, indiscriminately, all the behavior problems of boys and girls alike? Third, if the teacher does counseling, can he hope for success with those students who are causing him, and him alone, the greatest difficulty in classroom adjustment? Let us look at these three issues.

Should teachers do any counseling at all? It is almost impossible for good teachers to avoid requests for help, advice, and support in many personal problems. This does not mean that guidance experts, where such are available, might not be able to deal more adequately with many of these problems. Indeed, the growth of professional counseling services in the public schools is a phenomenon that is most encouraging. Such experts have specialized training beyond that of the classroom teacher. Furthermore, since they have time to sit down with the individual student for relaxed, unhurried discussions of his problems, constructive solutions are more likely to emerge. The classroom teacher has such opportunities only as he takes them from his out-of-school time. It is sensible, then, for the beginning teacher to keep always in mind the very real limitations on his ability to do the total counseling job. Where experts are available, they should certainly be used to the fullest. Unfortunately, in most high schools, the expert, when he is available at all, has a case load far above his capacity to handle. The great bulk of counseling, if it is to be done, must therefore still be done by the classroom teacher.¹¹ (See pages 549-550 of this chapter for further discussion of the use of the expert.)

Are men teachers generally able to do a better counseling job with boys and women teachers with girls? There are certain sex-linked problems that a boy or girl would be most reluctant to discuss with an adult of the opposite sex who is a teacher-counselor. A teacher with insight and understanding, however, not only can, but will have

¹¹ A good review of the main arguments on both sides of this controversy may be found in the following two references: Elizabeth Chase, "Oil and Water: Teaching and Guidance Can't Be Mixed," *Clearing House*, 25:210-211, December 1950; "Teaching and Guidance Can Be Mixed, A Symposium," *Clearing House*, 25:408-416, March 1951.

to, deal with the personal problems of both boys and girls. Being married often helps a teacher understand the personal problems faced by the opposite sex, which previous experiences have usually blocked out. By and large, boys share few things in the lives of girls, and vice versa. Their experiences have been limited to those that concern their own sex most deeply, with only a limited and censored view of the other sex. When a woman teacher feels strongly that a boy in trouble would do better to talk with a man teacher or counselor, she should certainly feel free to suggest to a male colleague that the boy needs help.

Should a teacher try to act as a counselor with students whose problem appears to be most acute in his classes? If a teacher observes that Diane is really unpleasant and rude in his class only, then it may be that the root of the trouble is a personality clash between them.

After much trouble with Fred, Mrs. Drake was shocked one day when he suddenly got up, slammed down his books, and stalked out of the room, saying so all could hear, "I just can't stand this any longer." Later, when Mrs. Drake talked with the principal, she learned that Fred had flung himself into the principal's office, saying he just had to be taken out of her class. The principal, a patient and understanding person, let Fred talk. After much preliminary letting off of steam, during which time the principal did not try to argue with the student or pass any judgments, Fred finally said, "You know, I think it's because Mrs. Drake is so much like my mother, and I am always in hot water at home. I just hate women teachers." After another half hour or so of talk, Fred had uncovered much of his own problem and had stated a solution of his own: he would like a few days out of class—he would study the assignments and do the work—and then he would return and behave better, since he saw the problem better himself. The principal relayed the substance of the discussion to Mrs. Drake, who was interested and relieved. A later interview and visit with Fred's parents helped to give insight into Fred's situation; a competing sister also made him resent women. The principal told the P.E. teacher, who was able to give Fred a job as assistant to the student athletic manager in charge of equipment and shower room. This contact with older men and his own male peers did much to help Fred accept the women in his world.

Another case, very similar to this, was reported by a teacher. Here the man teacher had evidently antagonized a girl in his class to such a point that the girl's whole life was being dominated by this

one conflict. So critical had this become that the parents finally transferred the girl to another school. Some behavior problems do arise out of this kind of personality clash, and in such cases the aid of another member of the staff may have to be enlisted to gain insight and help.

Finding the Time for Counseling Interviews

Assuming that the teacher has a genuine interest in becoming a teacher-counselor, the problem of finding time for counseling must still be faced. Some teachers are able to use the minutes before and after school for this purpose. Too often, however, before school the teacher is engaged in last-minute preparations. If there is to be a motion picture that day, he must check the projector schedule, see that the motion picture has arrived, and tend to countless other small details—perhaps attend a committee meeting, or arrange book or magazine orders, or distribute reading material. These many details may interfere with the preschool half hour, and thus, for many teachers, it is wisest to leave this time free for last-minute replanning.

Many high schools gather their students from a wide radius. Students may arrive by bus just a few moments before the bell and leave just after the last bell has rung. In many schools, from one half to two thirds of the student body are immediately excluded from such after- or before-school conference time.

Lunch time? Ah, here is another free period. But teachers, like all other workers, appreciate a few moments of peace and quiet in the middle of the day. Often the lunch hour is only thirty or forty-five minutes long, so that even a hurried lunch leaves little time. The teacher's free period? Well, teachers treasure their free period for grading papers, preparing tests, planning for the next day, arranging for films, seeing the principal about some problem. If the teacher can make use of none of these few brief out-of-class hours, arranging for a conference may be difficult indeed.

Even if the proper time is found, there is another problem. Students may be suspicious and on the defensive when called for a special interview by a teacher. "I must have done something wrong"

is the first reaction. This natural suspicion can be allayed by rather simple devices. First, the teacher can announce early in his acquaintance with the class that he hopes, before the first month is over, to have an individual conference with each student, and for that reason he wants to have them fill out a form, such as the accompanying one:

Name:			
Class schedule:	Period	Teacher	Room
	1st		
	2nd		
	etc.		
Which of the following times would be best for you if we could schedule a conference at that time?			
1. Before school			
2. Lunch hour			
3. After school			
4. Study hall (Hour Room)			

On the basis of this information, the teacher can set up a schedule for his students. This record, kept for each student and, if necessary, pasted on the back of his personnel card as described on page 525, will give the teacher a rapid method for getting in touch with any student for special conferences at the time best suited for the student.

A scheduled conference with every class member would, of course, require many more hours than any teacher would have. Two alternatives are suggested:

1. Make an assignment early in the semester that requires library research. Arrange for two thirds of the class to go at one time, and use the class period to interview the other third.

2. Have the class work in groups during the class hour on projects that will not necessitate every member's contributing, and then call to the desk for individual conferences as many students as time permits.

Finding the Place for Counseling Interviews

If conferences are attempted in class, several important questions immediately arise. If the teacher is talking with one student, will there be a hazard of class disorder because his attention is diverted? Indeed, this is highly probable unless the teacher has set the stage for the procedure ahead of time. It is important to explain to the class that this disorder is exactly what may happen and that cooperation is expected, and then to ask students what they think they might do. One factor that will favor the teacher is that, by and large, students respond well to such personal attention. They feel that it is valuable to them, and to the degree that they respect the activity that is going on, they are likely to give the teacher the desired cooperation. Of course, a teacher would be unwise to have such conferences when the class for some reason or other is very excited. For example, the best intentions in the world will not keep a class quiet and orderly on the day of a big game. Such a day demands whole-group activity, where the attention of the class can be obtained and directed to some expressive activity.

What about being overheard by other class members? A student may be very happy to have a teacher help him with personal problems, but he is not likely to appreciate an audience of his contemporaries. Some classrooms are entirely too small for any private discussion. In that case, the teacher should not attempt conferences in class. He will find that students freeze up and are offended if he seems to ask for private information. The teacher should be very alert to whether the student thinks others can hear what he says.

Mr. Phillips has his desk at an angle in the corner; on the left, toward the class, he has a three-drawer file. This file gives the desk corner a sort of cozy air; he even has an ivy plant growing luxuriantly on top. There are no student desks directly in line with this file, since the desk has been placed so far in the corner. However, any student talking to him has to sit behind the file drawer, almost hidden from view by his classmates and with his back toward them. Mr. Phillips can then look over the student's head toward the rest of the class and yet not detract from the kind of semiprivate atmosphere that this desk and file arrangement has created.

Often, by placing his desk at the back of the room, the teacher can help the student feel that he is not being watched or listened to by his classmates. Arranging the seats in the class to leave a wide

aisle around the desk helps. The teacher, of course, must be careful to talk in low tones directly to the student, so that only the student can hear him.

Should all teachers conduct interviews? Some teachers may object that interviewing actually does not affect the kind of teaching they are doing. For example, can the teaching of mathematics be affected by students' personal problems? Yes, indeed! Knowing how a student feels about mathematics, discovering that he has a hobby that could be greatly improved by mathematical skill, learning that his father is very violent on the subject of his mastering mathematics, or that his mother always tells him that no one in their family can do mathematics—such insights into individuals can go a long way toward increasing the effectiveness of mathematics teaching. This kind of insight will be of aid to any teacher of any subject.

The Interview: Getting Acquainted

The get-acquainted interview, as described and recommended here, should be simple and exploratory in nature. It is not aimed at therapy. It is aimed at establishing rapport, indicating the interest of the teacher in the student, and gaining some insight into the student as a person. The kinds of questions that might be asked are—

1. Well, John, is history one of your favorite subjects? What are your favorite subjects? Which ones do you do best in? Do you know why you do better in them than in others?
2. What hobbies do you have?
3. Do you work after school? Have any home chores?
4. What do you like best about school? Are you in any of the clubs, teams, or other groups?
5. What do you want to do after you graduate? What does your family think you should do? (This question leads to questions about family or guardians if the student is not living with his family. The teacher should be careful not to probe; if the student is resistant, then it is wisest to go on to the next question.)
6. Have you had any problems so far in the work that we have done in this class?

A structured interview such as the one above, in which certain questions are asked in a certain order, will help, first, to establish rapport, and, second, to lead naturally into areas of significance for

the teacher. It ends naturally on an impersonal note, so that the student feels that he has not told too much about himself. The actual questions should not be in front of the teacher. He would do well to memorize them or to have a card with a little key on it to remind him of the sequence of questions. Should he take notes on what he is told? Some students may object, but if the teacher jots down clearly for the student to see only a few words, such as, "paper boy after school," "prefers science fiction magazines," "has trouble with spelling scientific names," then the student will feel more secure and more willing to talk to the teacher in later, more crucial situations.

The Interview: Meeting Personal Adjustment Problems of Students

Now let us look at interviews that are required for the trouble spots in education. The teacher who finds students who are unable or unwilling to adjust to the school pattern will feel called upon to talk with the student. Yet—

. . . there is a limiting factor to a teacher's success in an extraclass interview. The actual situation in which the troublesome or significant behavior occurred usually has a very different connotation to all the persons involved than the interview situation in which that behavior is being examined in retrospect. The dynamics in each situation are quite different. It is one thing to be successful in dealing with a child in a face-to-face interview; it is quite another thing to be successful in dealing with that child's troublesome behavior at the moment it is occurring within the classroom.¹²

What happens in the interview between teacher and student may go a long way toward assisting the student to make a more adequate adjustment in class, but, as the quotation above suggests, often the classroom conditions are still such as to interfere with maximal adjustment. The use of the counseling interview to help a student behave in a more acceptable manner should therefore not

¹² Betty Madigan and Mary Louise Steadman, "Accepting and Clarifying the Child's Feelings," chapter xviii in *Fostering Mental Health in Our Schools*, 1950 Yearbook of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (Washington, D. C.: The Association, 1950), p. 301.

be overstressed, nor should too much be expected. After all, if a student is a troublemaker because the other students tease him about his family, helping the student see this will still not stop the teasing. The teacher has an obligation, it is true, to help the student see his situation and gain insight into what is occurring, but many of the provocative factors will be beyond the control of the individual student or teacher.

The teacher may find that the problem is really rooted in an impossible family relationship, in a physical growth problem, in a neighborhood gang—problems the teacher may not be able to deal with at all. In such a case, what should the teacher do? Obviously, call on those agencies and facilities that can attack such problems. These agencies and facilities will be discussed later and elaborated on in other sections. The important point here is that the teacher should not put all his trust in an interview or series of interviews. Although a useful tool when skillfully utilized, the interview obviously will not solve all the problems of students.

Why Interviews Fail

Before we examine some illustrative interviews, we need to emphasize again that the interview intended primarily to coerce is bound to fail as an effective counseling instrument. Obviously, the student does not want to be coerced. If the teacher is going to “tell the student just what he had better do,” the atmosphere will be far from conducive to a real understanding of why the student caused the trouble. In order, therefore, for counseling to work, the teacher might very well wait until several days have elapsed after a problem incident has occurred, and then call the student in at a time and place convenient for uninterrupted conversation. By this time both student and teacher have re-evaluated their own roles in the problem. If the teacher has used the time wisely, he has checked office records about the individual student thoroughly in order to see whether any light can be thrown on the specific difficulty. Perhaps the most unwise thing a teacher can say, after a student has been particularly difficult and after many warnings, is “Well, John, you had better stay after

school this evening; it seems that you and I should have a little talk." Such "little talks" are usually doomed to failure. What would a better approach be?

Situation: Barbara has consistently "forgotten" her assignments. Whenever any homework is due, she does not turn it in on time and often fails to turn it in at all if no class time is provided for her to do it. Because she has not done the work, she is not informed about the topics the class discusses; she is therefore bored, and in her boredom she constantly tries to distract the attention of her nearest classmates by chattering, sending notes, turning around in her seat. Miss Cohen has tried to help her and has often had to reprimand her for interrupting. One such incident occurred on Wednesday. Barbara was acting worse than usual and Miss Cohen, in desperation, asked her to go to the library and complete the last three assignments. For the next several days, Barbara behaved well in class, but still has failed to turn in her work.

On the following Monday, Miss Cohen says: "Barbara, I noticed that you have study period right after lunch, when I have my free period. Could you meet me here so that we could go over some of these long-lost assignments?"

Barbara acquiesces; the problem that she faces has not been ignored—the teacher could not pretend that she just wanted to have a "little talk" with Barbara, because they are both aware of the area of trouble. But Miss Cohen has been very careful not to call Barbara in for a conference until the situation between them is as calm and pleasant as possible.

Counseling in Action: Some Typical Interviews

What does the teacher do in an interview with a student? There are two schools of thought here. One approach is to tell the student quickly how you understand his problem, outline what you consider it to be, and give him direct instruction about what to do. This kind of *directive* counseling has the advantage of being less time-consuming. Furthermore, the student is not uncertain about what is known about him and what is expected of him. However, the method has definite limitations, some of which we will discuss below. The other approach, the *nondirective*, is a more subtle kind of counseling. Here

the teacher merely expresses to the student a feeling that perhaps the student has a problem. The student is encouraged through *interest* and relative *silence* on the part of the teacher to talk about the problem. The teacher gives no judgment regarding what the student says, merely reflects back to the student whatever feeling tone is manifest. This is intended to allow the student to recognize his problem himself and propose his own solution. We will develop this type of interviewing in more detail below.

Now we are ready to dissect actual conference situations. In the following pages are illustrative interview excerpts,¹³ showing good and poor techniques in counseling with students. These are given in detail, with analytic commentaries, because, as we have stated, the interview is central to all counseling. Skill in interviewing must be learned as one learns any other of the skills that contribute to effective teaching.

The descriptions that follow contrast various types of interviewing approaches and indicate throughout the nondirective, permissive approach to the same problem. The kinds of interview attitudes illustrated, which *do not* result in better student adjustment, are—

1. The disciplinarian.
2. The judge.
3. The moralist.
4. The wishful thinker.
5. The helper.
6. The prober.

In reading these descriptions, it is important to note those words and phrases that contribute to rapport and those that interfere with it; those phrases that indicate genuine interest in helping the student understand and solve his own problem, and those that make him feel helpless and at fault.

Now let us look at the sample interviews.

1. The *Disciplinarian*

TEACHER: *I don't think you have been working as we expect students to work in this class.*

¹³ Some of the descriptive categories and portions of the conversations are taken, by permission of the publisher, from Dugald S. Arbuckle, *Teacher Counseling* (Cambridge, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Press, Inc., 1950), pp. 52-68.

STUDENT: *I don't know what you mean.*

TEACHER: *You know very well what I mean; look, here is my roll book. Let me see: No report for last Friday, last Wednesday, the exam—you were absent that day and didn't make it up. You realize this behavior is not acceptable.*

The student is being put on the spot. The teacher is trying to get the student in a corner, with all the advantage on the side of the teacher. If and when the teacher ever gets around to discovering why this series of events occurred, the student will be upset, angry, resentful. Punishment is usually the only outcome of this approach.

Teacher-Counselor

TEACHER: *I asked you to stay after school for a few minutes because of your work recently.*

STUDENT: *I know, I haven't done any, have I? (defiant)*

TEACHER: *You know what the problem is . . .*

STUDENT: *Yeah, I never get my work in. I don't like to do it, it . . .*

TEACHER: *I see . . .*

Here the teacher makes the preamble as short as possible, speaks mildly and unemotionally, does not try to interrupt the student but rather encourages the student to talk about the problem that is of first concern. Later, some other aspects of this problem will appear, but the teacher lets the student tell what he will in his own fashion, following his own pattern.

2. The Judge

STUDENT: *I just can't do geometry.*

TEACHER: *The real trouble is that you waste all your time.*

STUDENT: *I really try.*

TEACHER: *You might try, but you don't concentrate when you do. I bet you have the radio on all the time. This is not a good way to study.*

STUDENT: *But I . . .*

TEACHER: *Now, no buts. . . .*

No sympathy is expressed. The teacher knows much better than the student what his trouble is. There is condemnation without inquiry, without listening to what the student has to say. The student feels on trial; he is always on the defensive with such a teacher; his answers are typically started with "But I . . .," and he rarely has a chance to finish them. The teacher creates the impression that he is all-knowing, the expert, the super-father.

Teacher-Counselor

STUDENT: *I just can't do geometry.*

TEACHER: *You feel you just can't do geometry . . .*

TEACHER: *I don't know. Sometimes I think I'm just dumb. My mother tells me I'm dumb all the time. I bet she's right.*

TEACHER: *Your mother tells you you are dumb . . .*

STUDENT: *Yeah . . .*

TEACHER: *All the time . . .*

STUDENT: *Yeah . . . but I don't think I am. Anyway, I'm not dumb like old Fatso Grooby—now he's a real stupe. Why, do you know . . .*

The teacher reflected back the student's feeling; often this is done in the identical words the student uses, but the inflection indicates no judgment, no feeling on the part of the teacher, merely interest, perhaps slight solicitude. Often, a slightly higher pitch, a slight questioning tone, is an assistance in such an interview situation. Here the student responds well; he is beginning to reveal his feelings about himself, his capacities, his reactions to others. Soon the teacher will have built up a great deal of insight into the problem.

3. The Moralist

STUDENT: *What do you think I should do?*

TEACHER: *Well, you are the one who really has to make the decision. You have to be able to face these things and decide for yourself. Later in life no one is going to make decisions for you.*

STUDENT: *Well, I wish you would help me.*

TEACHER: *As I said, you must make your own decisions. Now I think the best thing to do is drop the geometry and take study hall this semester, and then take typing next year.*

The moralist cannot resist telling the student how to behave in life. He is ready with aphorisms and value judgments for every occasion. He is so full of moral wisdom that no student would willingly come to him with a confession of antisocial behavior in order to get help. This teacher would merely make the student's guilt worse without helping him out of his dilemma. The moralist must give advice because he knows he is right.

Teacher-Counselor

STUDENT: *What do you think I should do?*

TEACHER: *You feel that you need help in deciding . . .*

STUDENT: *Yeah, I am sort of uncertain myself, and anyway . . .*

TEACHER: *I see your problem . . .*

STUDENT: Now, I could change majors, couldn't I? But my folks would have a fit. I don't know—if I fail geometry it might even be worse. Is it possible to drop a course?

TEACHER: Yes.

STUDENT: Now maybe if I do that, by next year I can convince Dad I just can't go to college . . . I just hate going to college; we fight about it at home all the time. Dad is so stubborn sometimes; sometimes I think if someone from school could tell him what I can do . . .

TEACHER: You feel we could tell your father something you can't get across to him . . .

Notice how the teacher made no judgment at all about what the student said. He recognized the student's feeling of uncertainty; and yet underneath it the student was able to see possible alternatives. Even more important, an insight has been gained into the real dynamics of the student's problem; it rests with the father, in part. An opening has been given for the school to work directly with the parent in the solution of the student's problem.

4. The Wishful Thinker

STUDENT: I get so worried about not doing well.

TEACHER: Now let's not worry about such things; I am sure everything will turn out all right.

STUDENT: I just feel so blue sometimes and there are so many problems.

TEACHER: Now, now, everything will be all right; we can't let ourselves worry about everything, you know; that just makes it worse.

The constant optimist, the wishful-thinker type, does not want to admit that things are bad, or cruel, or hopeless, or difficult. Let's all look at the sunny side. Sometimes this type is the jovial, back-slapping, booster kind of person. From him no real counsel is available because he is so aggressively cheery. He sounds patronizing, and he usually is. After several such cheery interviews, the student will quickly close up and evade the teacher—"If I feel blue, I don't want someone to tell me I don't or shouldn't."

Teacher-Counselor

STUDENT: I get so worried about not doing well.

TEACHER: You are worried about your own success . . .

STUDENT: Well, yes and no. I don't think it is all my fault. It's these darned depressions I get into. I just want to cry and cry.

TEACHER: You feel like crying . . .

STUDENT: (Voice shakes) And I do, and I know I'm a big sissy; there isn't anything wrong. (Student cries.)

TEACHER: You feel ashamed because you cry for no good reason.

STUDENT: Yeah . . . Do you think everyone feels this way?

TEACHER: You feel different from other boys and girls.

Again, we note the way the teacher resists the impulse to sympathize or reprimand. One of the real possibilities of this kind of counseling, however, is that students will cry, will get emotional, because this sort of counseling recognizes the real emotions of individuals. The teacher develops skill in meeting these situations—not by getting alarmed, or being sympathetic and saying, “Now, now, Louise, there isn't anything to cry about,” but, as the teacher above, by merely recognizing that the student has a real trouble here and bringing the conversation back to the problem.

5. The Helper

TEACHER: Now, you just tell me what is bothering you, and I bet I can help you out.

STUDENT: Oh, I don't think anyone can help me . . .

TEACHER: Now you know we teachers are very happy to do anything we can.

STUDENT: Well, it's that science class. I don't get along with Mr. Dipple. Would you get me changed?

TEACHER: Well, now . . .

The helper wants to shoulder everyone's burdens; and, as in this case, if the offer of help is taken seriously, the teacher may be in a very difficult position. Often the teacher really can do nothing. The student learns to distrust the offers of help and to suspect that teachers don't mean what they say. Offering to help out leaves the student just as dependent as ever. We need to help young people solve their own problems, not solve problems for them.

Teacher-Counselor

TEACHER: You want me to help you, Jane?

STUDENT: Well, not exactly. I wish I could get out of this mess myself . . .

TEACHER: You feel you are in a mess . . .

STUDENT: (Bursts out) I just hate Mr. Dipple, and I know he hates me.

TEACHER: I see . . .

STUDENT: He is pretty nice to me, and all that, but those worms and things just give me the creeps.

TEACHER: You feel Mr. Dipple is really all right.

STUDENT: Oh, he's O.K., I guess; I get upset every time I see a worm. Do you think he'd let me off if I explained how they made me feel?

Here the teacher does not offer help, but indicates a recognition of the student's need, and, as actually can be seen, the student doesn't want help but clarification. By the end of the conversation, the student has pinned down the problem to her own feelings; has even outlined a possible action.

6. The Prober

TEACHER: Tell me, Agnes, are you sure you are happy at home?

STUDENT: Well, O.K., I guess.

TEACHER: Now be honest; do you get along well with your parents?

STUDENT: Oh, I don't know.

TEACHER: Now we can't get anywhere unless you tell me about yourself. Have you always been moody?

STUDENT: No, just recently and that is why I guess I seem to moon about in class.

TEACHER: Well, now we are getting someplace. You must have some worries you aren't telling me about.

There is a great temptation on the part of some teachers to pry personal information out of students. But students, like anyone else, protect their personal lives. This should be respected. The direct attack, as noted here, brings out resistance; this girl is not going to tell anyone anything. The teacher pounces on each new bit of information; even accuses the student of being bad because information is withheld. In this kind of interview no information that the student is not freely willing to give should be deliberately sought.

Teacher-Counselor

TEACHER: Agnes, I have noticed you have been sort of daydreaming in class . . .

STUDENT: Yes, I guess I have.

TEACHER: Do you want to tell me about it?

STUDENT: Gosh, what is there to tell?

TEACHER: You feel the daydreaming is your own problem.

STUDENT: Heck, it doesn't bother anyone else.

TEACHER: *(Just nods thoughtfully)*

STUDENT: *(Long silence)* No one ever noticed before.

TEACHER: *I see . . .*

STUDENT: *(Long silence)* There are so many things on my mind.
 . . . *(Bursts out)* You know, my parents are going to get a divorce.

TEACHER: You think about your home problem in class . . .

Another pattern of counseling can be seen here: The student does not want to talk, but the teacher feels an important problem is present. The teacher allows the student to remain silent, but indicates interest and no impatience. The feeling conveyed by the teacher is that the student doesn't have to talk at all if she doesn't want to, but here is someone interested in her. It is interesting to note that the student shows some surprise that anyone did notice the behavior. And underlying the symptom is the real cause, which the probing teacher above will never uncover.

Other Counseling Errors

There are other ways, in addition to those just discussed, in which teachers betray the counseling function. There is the teacher who is always in a great hurry; if he talks to a student, he fiddles nervously with a pencil, jumps up, looks at his watch, talks briskly, and tries to rush the student. The student quickly feels that this teacher is only pretending interest, but really has far more important things to do than talk with him. Then the student retreats into his own shell. It is also a serious error to forget the purpose of calling a student in. For example, George appears after school, and Miss Drew looks up, startled, and says, "Did you want something, George?" He replies, "Gosh, didn't you tell me to come in to see you?" What a dash of cold water this is, when the student felt that at last he could obtain a real hearing for his difficulty. Sometimes the teacher finds students coming to him for help of their own volition. To express surprise, resentment, or displeasure at this show of student initiative will kill it in the bud. If the teacher is genuinely busy and cannot talk with the student, a simple statement should be made: "You feel you would like to talk to me, Sam. I won't have the time this after-

noon, but let's set a date when we can get together." And an appointment is made then and there, so that the teacher preserves the student initiative for their later interview.

The Nondirective Approach

Let us review what the teacher-counselor was doing in the situations described earlier. The kind of interviewing that was recorded was nondirective in the sense that the teacher encouraged the student to talk as he wished, without attempting to force him into any preconceived mold or to impose his own ideas and wishes upon him.

Many counselors do not utilize nondirective techniques because they have different purposes for the guidance interview, seek different outcomes, and hold a different philosophy of guidance. It is suggested here, however, that the classroom teacher probably functions best as a counselor when using the nondirective approach. Of course, no one method will fit all individuals. This approach is emphasized here because it is not discussed in much of the literature about teacher counseling. Furthermore, the nondirective approach is somewhat contrary to our usual experience. We are used to being told. As teachers, unfortunately, we are tempted to repeat the pattern by telling others. Yet much of the research in the field demonstrates that when someone is told to do something, he may or may not do it, whereas, if he makes up his own mind to an action, he is likely to follow through on it. This is the purpose of nondirective counseling: to promote as many self-decisions as possible, so that the individual is better able to direct his own destiny than before, rather than remaining dependent on outside experts.¹⁴

Some Hazards in Nondirective Counseling

The nondirective approach is recommended as most useful to the teacher in the long run, but there are certain hazards in its use

¹⁴ Carl R. Rogers, *Client-Centered Therapy* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1951).

that must be anticipated. First, students are not used to such treatment. The result may be more than the teacher bargained for.

Mr. Gray was just learning how to conduct a nondirective interviewing session. Maryann, who seemed like a very sweet and normal girl, was his first subject. He started by asking her how she liked school. The rapidity with which disturbing material was poured forth startled him. Maryann liked school but was very upset about the high standards she must attain. Her family was pushing her. In the school she had attended previously, success had been easy. In this school, things were much harder, she felt, and it had gotten so that she was almost sick every time she faced a quiz or test. As she went on, her hands got tense, her face became pale, and in a few moments she started to weep violently. Mr. Gray floundered around with words of sympathy, and finally Maryann became calm.

Not only are students unused to such treatment, but teachers are shocked by the quick revelation of personal trouble, often accompanied by high emotionality. The consequences may be damaging. The student may bitterly regret having poured out his soul, feel guilty and resentful toward the teacher who let him do it. Although individuals appreciate the release of the counseling situation, their first impulse is often to avoid forever the individual to whom they were so revealing. For this reason, the teacher may well avoid allowing the student to go too far in a nondirective interview. Gently guiding the student away from personal revelation that may be too damaging, by terminating the interview kindly because of time factors or by referring the student to someone else as soon as it seems a really deep problem exists, will help protect both the student and the teacher.

The emotional impact on the recipient of such confidences must not be underestimated. People who work constantly in such roles as counselors, psychiatrists, and the like, find it emotionally exhausting. For this reason, teachers, who are under constant emotional challenge from the classroom situation itself, must not allow student interviews to place excessive demands upon them. The teacher should not become emotionally involved in the student's problem. This is unfair to the student, and can be very destructive to his further growth in self-direction.

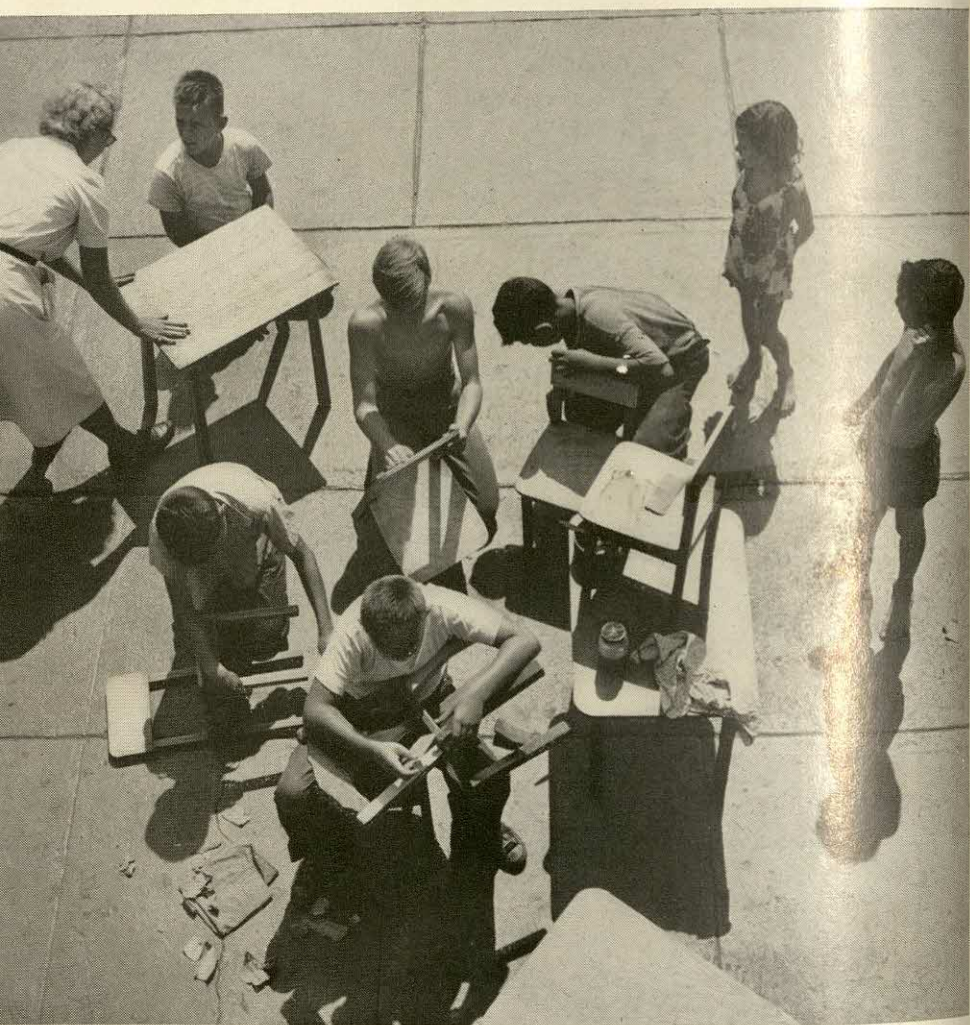
Another word of caution: The nondirective interview may produce from the student material that only a clinical counselor is

By tradition, by the tight "layer-cake" scheduling of periods, and to some extent by our own lack of imagination, we have been led to think of the high school learning situation as necessarily being confined within the four walls of the classroom. This stereotype has, however, been challenged more and more frequently in recent years by creative teachers. Knowing that boys and girls learn as they live and that the world outside the classroom is a laboratory-studio of infinite variety, they have taken their students into living contact with the out-of-school environment.

Here, for example, high school art students paint "real life" on the edge of Lake Erie. They are facing the problem of capturing the wonder and beauty of the lake shore on their sketch pads. In the other picture, boys are grappling with the practicalities of surveying, using a theodolite, working at a real problem with a team. For a while their classroom is a windswept pass in the ranch country.

These students are finding the out-of-doors a natural place in which to continue their studies. But are the possibilities for out-of-doors—or out-of-classroom—education so very much less in other areas of learning? What about science, social studies, foreign languages, guidance? What do these possibilities really depend on? [*Photos courtesy U.S. Office of Education (top) and The School Executive (bottom)*]





Many of our junior and senior high schools still operate on the premise that education is "preparation for life." Inevitably this concept leads to artificial activities, exercises, tests. "Preparation for life" can be carried on only by making present living significant in terms of skills, habits, and attitudes that will be useful later.

Boys and girls need to believe in the usefulness and importance of what they are doing. The teacher's responsibility is to plan so that the job is meaningful, significant, valuable now to his students, and also promotes learning that is valuable for the future. Whenever students do something that contributes to the welfare of others, they gain in self-respect, and that in itself is a most important lesson.

Here junior high school boys are building furniture that is *needed* by a nursery school—under the watchful eyes of two of their "customers." Making a "what-not" might require as much—perhaps even more—skill, but would it teach so many important lessons for the future, would it provide so sound a basis for pride in accomplishment and service? [Photo courtesy Standard Oil Co., N. J.]

equipped to understand or handle. The teacher may aggravate the student's difficulty by allowing such material to be revealed and then being unable to give the student support in facing it. For this reason, the teacher who develops skill in nondirective interviewing would be well advised to watch for danger signals: excessive emotionality on the part of the student, sudden blocks in talking, uninterrupted monologues, which the student can't seem to stop. The classroom teacher should not try to perform deep therapy. This takes highly skilled and trained individuals. The teacher, however, by showing the kind of insight that nondirective counseling demands, by having the attitude of permissiveness and faith in the individual's ability to find his own solution to his own problem, can do a great deal to help most normal students meet their problems.

Nondirective interviewing requires considerable practice. In order to gain insight into the dynamics of this kind of interviewing, to realize its values as well as its pitfalls, beginning teachers should try out the technique in noncounseling situations. Nondirective interviewing may be used, for example, in the gathering of opinion. There is no danger here of intruding into the individual's personal life and creating a situation that the neophyte interviewer cannot handle. But, at the same time, such practice helps the beginner concentrate on the feeling tone of the statements that are made, to develop the ability to listen in a neutral fashion, and to acquire the skill needed to close such an interview at the proper time with good rapport. Tape-recording of interviews for post-interview analysis is an excellent technique; mistakes made by the interviewer can then be detected and understood.

The Specialist Is Your Ally

We have stressed thus far, in this chapter, the role of the teacher in the counseling process and have shown why it is that the counseling burden must inevitably fall on the classroom teacher. It is, however, highly important that the teacher realize his own limitations in working with individuals and know who is available in his immediate school or in the larger community to assist students. If he

is in a high school with an enrollment of 750 or more students, he may find a full-time counselor on the staff. In schools of smaller enrollment, he may find part-time counselors or none at all. Where there are full-time counselors, the guidance office can provide the teacher with much helpful information about his students and can be utilized for referral of difficult cases. The teacher will want to investigate the total guidance program in his school in order to know exactly what kinds of help are provided, since these vary considerably from school to school.

Furthermore, the teacher will want to familiarize himself with the resources and personnel of the following specialized agencies of school and community:

Welfare and attendance personnel. The attendance office is typically concerned with truancy, drop-outs, and special problems of youngsters which may prevent their regular attendance at school.

School social workers. The school social worker, sometimes known as the "visiting teacher," has the responsibility of linking school and community services, obtaining the help of community agencies where needed, gathering home data for school use, and, in some cases, doing tutorial teaching at home for convalescent students.

Child guidance clinics. Here the teacher will usually find a team composed of a psychiatrist, two or more psychologists, several specially trained social workers, psychometrists, and other special personnel in the field of counseling. In larger and wealthier communities, these clinics are sometimes associated with the school systems. More often, they are operated by government units or privately supported agencies. There are far too few of these excellent institutions to meet the great need of children and youth for specialized help.

Family agencies and other social agencies. In most medium-sized and all large communities there is an intricate network of social agencies dealing with many facets of family and child needs. Foster-home placement bureaus, detention homes, family service agencies, county welfare departments, welfare agencies organized by local church groups, and the Salvation Army Homes for unwed mothers—these and countless other agencies should be canvassed by the teacher so that he can, as occasion arises, refer individuals to them for help that the school cannot—and probably should not—provide.

Special classes and schools. Finally, there are both public and private agencies especially organized to care for the needs of individuals handicapped by physical or emotional problems. Where these are, who can be admitted, and what services are provided should be known by the teacher, who can then pass this information on to those who may need it.

It is unfortunately true that all the services mentioned above are staffed and financed to meet only the most acute needs. It is also true that those who need such services most usually do not know that they are available. The individual classroom teacher is in a strategic position to bridge this gap between the agency and the individual, since the school will have almost all the children of most of the people—with their many problems. In orienting himself to his community, then, the new teacher will want to make a special inquiry into the agencies and services mentioned above; he will find such information invaluable in emergencies.

SUMMARY

To recapitulate, we have seen how extensive the responsibility of the teacher is for the guidance of the individual adolescent. The major stress in this chapter has been on the most effective method of talking with adolescents. These principles should guide the teacher:

Establish rapport: have a genuine feeling of friendliness and interest in your students.

Let them know what you as an individual teacher can do for them: don't attempt to do too much or claim that you can be of no help whatsoever.

Seek out those who need help but do not know it or are too shy or frightened to come for help.

Look for problems in all areas of adolescent growth: merely because a student is doing adequate work academically, do not assume that there are no important problems of personal adjustment.

Show no shock, no matter what the problem is they want to talk about. Be as matter of fact and objective as possible.

Let them talk.

Let the student formulate his own solution with your aid; don't

take over and give the answers merely because you can analyze the problem so much more quickly; your solution may be very far from the student's own solution.

Be content with slow progress, and in some cases with no progress at all.

Be concerned with underlying causes, not merely immediate behavior.

Call upon specialists to help you.

Besides guidance on personal problems, the teacher can offer other kinds of help to students. Group guidance—facing general problems with the whole class—is one source of assistance. This will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

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Techniques of Group Guidance

SO FAR WE HAVE BEEN CONCERNED with the counseling of the individual. Now we must look at teacher counseling as a classroom method. The setting in which teachers can perform group guidance will vary with the school. But remember, every classroom or club situation is a human-relations laboratory and, as such, requires the sensitivity of one schooled in the guidance and counseling attitude. No teacher can be excused from this responsibility.¹ The important point here is that every teacher must be aware of, and sensitive to, the interpersonal aspects of the classroom, whether the subject being taught is mathematics, art, chemistry, or Spanish.

In this chapter we will be concerned primarily with how the teacher can work with the total class in developing personal understanding of the many aspects of adjustment faced by the adolescent. We will discuss the teacher in the homeroom, where group guidance is planned for in the school program; the guidance possibilities of

¹ Bernice Baxter, "Getting Along Together," *NEA Journal*, 38:104-105, February 1950.

orientation courses; counseling as a general classroom method of value in any subject field; and, finally, the methods that the teacher can use in studying and understanding the interpersonal relationships of the classroom.

Guidance in the Homeroom

The more formal setting for group guidance occurs in many high schools under the name "homeroom." This administrative device allows one teacher to take major responsibility for a group of thirty to thirty-five students. The teacher may meet with the group once a day for twenty to thirty minutes, or several times during the week for an hour. During this homeroom period, the teacher is expected to carry out various routines in connection with arranging schedules, to check attendance and absence, to discuss student government and elections procedures. In addition, the homeroom is often designated as the guidance period, during which the teacher is encouraged to discuss with students the kinds of personal and group concerns that are not covered by standard curricular offerings. It is a place where the teacher seeks to understand better the personal life and problems of each individual.

In one junior high school, for example, the ninth-grade boys were separated from the girls during the homeroom period. It was felt that much of the teasing and hostility between boys and girls that had tormented the faculty and administration over several years might be better handled if boys were under the guidance of men teachers and girls under women teachers to discuss, over the course of the year, some of the heterosexual problems that become crucial at this age. The procedure worked quite well. There was a decrease in boy-girl unruliness. In other schools, it has proved better to keep the sexes together for discussion. Using the homeroom for this kind of help implies special group guidance techniques. It is not advisable to have a discussion about personal problems just for the sake of discussion. Such a discussion must be especially planned and led with skill.

Several suggestions for homeroom discussions may be offered.

Fedder² suggests questionnaires of the students' problems as the basis for group guidance in either homeroom or club situations. For example, if the group seems to be very much interested in learning the proper etiquette for formal dances, then class time may be devoted to discussion of the many problems that arise when boy takes girl. Typically, students are worried over personal and interpersonal problems (described on pages 520 and 521). These problems are central for the homeroom teacher.

The homeroom teacher may wish to call upon experts to deal with some of the problems raised. For example, if there is a question of grooming, a home economics teacher or a consultant in a local department store might give the students some pointers on improving their personal appearance.

Miss Snow and her eleventh-grade homeroom committee decided that one homeroom period might be devoted to hair-styling. The boys could be brought in to represent the "male viewpoint." So many of the girls did not know what hair style was most attractive for their particular facial type that such a discussion would be very valuable. Miss Snow knew that one of the department stores in a near-by city had a very well-informed hair stylist, who often addressed both school and club groups on this problem. The consultant was happy to come, at no charge, since it was considered good public relations by the store. After a very pleasant talk, the consultant asked if anyone would like to have her do over her hair. The girls were reticent, so Miss Snow suggested the consultant start on her! With a few quick flashes of the brush, the consultant completely changed her hairdo. The students were amazed and delighted; this was so much more attractive! Miss Snow was a bit taken aback at first, but she has worn her hair that way ever since! The other girls were encouraged then to try to rearrange each other's hair, and the consultant went around the room helping them. The boys judged the results, and everyone was quite pleased with the session.

Extensive utilization of student-teacher planning (see pages 134 to 145) in the homeroom program is recommended. No grade need be given, and a wide range of subject matter is available. Since the emphasis is on student interests and needs, students should play a major role in deciding the areas of concentration and the way they want to approach them.

² Ruth Fedder, *Guiding Homeroom and Club Activities* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1949), pp. 411-448.

What if students select an area in which the teacher feels very insecure? A typical area of this kind would be the problems of sexual adjustment, heterosexual relations, and the physiology of sex. More and more of the high schools today provide for instruction in the physiology of sex in either biology or hygiene courses. However, the growing adolescent has many other problems in this area that concern morality, emotional reactions, problems of marriage, and even child-rearing. Rather than deny students an opportunity to gain adult guidance in this area, where it is so sorely needed, the teacher who feels unable to lead such a discussion should find someone who would be competent and invite this person to lead the class. Such a person may be a doctor, a counselor in a family service agency, or another teacher on the faculty. Possibly several of these individuals could visit the class and answer the questions raised by the students. It would be wise to find what school policy is in such an area; some school systems forbid such instruction, while others make special provision for it. Certain church groups may wish their parishioners to be excused from discussions, and some parents may object. But since the majority of adolescents find sex-related problems most urgent, the teacher should try to meet this basic need in the best possible manner, whether he can carry the full burden or not.

Guidance in Orientation Courses

Some schools provide special courses known as "orientation courses," in which student problems constitute the course of study. Often these orientation courses are for entering freshmen, or, if there is a junior high school, for the sophomore group. Also, courses titled "Senior Problems," "Problems of Everyday Living," or "Social Living" usually include some units of time devoted to student problems. Some schools are suggesting that units concerned with students' personal problems are of value in many regular subject-matter courses. For example, in tenth-grade English, in the San Diego, California schools, a unit entitled "Getting Along with Others" is recommended. The major topics included are—

1. How can teen-agers make and keep worth-while friendships?
Developing an interest in others.

Developing social skills—conversation, letter-writing, introductions.

2. How can teen-agers learn to make and enjoy boy-girl friendships?
Applying literature to your problems in getting along in boy-girl relations.
Enjoying boy-girl friendships.
3. How can teen-agers maintain happy relationships with their families?
Improving family relations in everyday situations.
4. How can teen-agers learn to appreciate individual differences?³

On occasion these attempts to introduce some group guidance into the curriculum are severely criticized on the grounds that this has become the main effort of the high school. If this is ever true, criticism is indeed merited. Guidance efforts are intended to facilitate learning, not replace it. When personal problems are ignored, they may hamper the student's efficiency. Certainly the high school should not assume sole responsibility for this type of guidance, but neither can it be entirely removed from that responsibility.

Developing the Classroom Guidance Situation

The kind of classroom atmosphere in which group guidance takes place most effectively is similar to that of the democratic classroom (see Chapter 5). However, certain of its characteristics need further amplification here. To carry on adequate group guidance, the teacher must have greater-than-average ability to create a permissive atmosphere; that is, one in which the teacher actively accepts the way students feel, think, and behave without censure or judgment or disapproval.

The class was discussing the assignment for the next day. Sidney burst out with: "Aw, I think the old windbag who wrote this book sure must have been a dope." The teacher, instead of chiding him for such an attitude, said instead, "You feel this book isn't very interesting." Susan chimed in: "It is so dull, Miss Andrews." Other students

³ San Diego City Schools, "An Experimental Resource Unit on Getting Along with Others," Grade X, San Diego City Schools, 1950. (Mimeo.)

entered the discussion, many expressing similar opinions, with Miss Andrews merely nodding, listening, helping those talk who felt they wanted to, until the class had exhausted its comments about the book and the assignment. The group then rather cheerfully went back to the original assignment and carried on a lively and friendly discussion about the major ideas to be sought in the next chapter. The teacher had used the occasion of Sidney's remark to let the students get rid of some of their resentment without scolding them for holding undesirable attitudes; as a result, the class was much better able to continue with the expected work.

The opportunities for group guidance are abundant if the teacher is aware of the feeling tone of a student's remark. In the incident cited above, Miss Andrews could easily have stopped Sidney, prevented any further class comment, and continued with the assignment procedure. But the students would have had all their original feelings about the assignment bottled up inside them. Had a number of students failed to complete the assignment, it would have been easily traceable to the refusal of the teacher to let them express and face their own negative feelings. As it was, merely listening to their comments in no way meant that the teacher agreed with them; it merely meant that she respected their having such feelings. Her attitude said, in essence: "I understand that many of you may feel a dislike for the task at hand. I think it is all right for people to feel that way. We have a job to do here, however, which we can do better together if we understand and respect each other's feelings about it." Thus the class was able to move back to the original assignment without any resentment.

The principles for leading such a discussion with a group are similar to those for individual nondirective counseling.

1. The leader's comments are basically reflections and clarifications of the expressed feelings of the speaker, or comments indicating an understanding and acceptance of the feeling.
2. If a student does not wish to speak, he is not pressed to join the conversation.
3. If the conversation lags, the teacher does not direct the thinking of the students in the "right" channels.
4. The leader at no time criticizes, moralizes, or acts as judge.
5. The atmosphere is permissive, so that each student may say as much or as little as he wants.
6. The leader does not answer questions. Instead, he may reflect the

confusion of the student who is asking the question or make other comments that are equally effective.⁴

The permissive attitude is essential in any situation in which the teacher wants to create the feeling that the students can really decide things for themselves. The teacher-sponsor of the school club, for example, is merely an adult who gives help and advice when these are requested. Essentially, the club should provide a framework within which the students learn independence and have a chance to develop skill in exercising judgment. The teacher then must be able to be neutral, to let the young people talk as they wish about subjects that seem significant to them at the moment. Unless he can do this, the club situation, like any other adult-dominated situation, will not permit students to learn responsibility.

The permissive atmosphere is one in which a minimum of information and advice is handed out to the child. This applies not only to advice on personal matters but to advice which is carelessly distributed in the process known as teaching. Some teachers credit the child with having little in the way of latent capacities, and they feel that it is their duty to advise on every matter that may come up. . . . The permissive and understanding atmosphere is one in which independence, rather than dependence, is developed.⁵

It is essential that the teacher do some soul-searching himself: "Do I really want young people to grow away from me?" So often the adult who works with the young is meeting some of his own needs to be protective, to be wanted, and thus does not really help young people grow away from a need for his help. As we saw earlier (Chapter 5), one of the criteria of democratic education is that the teacher develops increasing independence. This attitude—the attitude that "I believe you can solve your own problems without my telling you what to do, that you know better than I do what would be the adequate solution for yourself"—characterizes the permissive atmosphere.

There is danger of overdoing permissiveness. In the hands of an unskilled person, the permissive atmosphere may easily degenerate

⁴ Dugald S. Arbuckle, *Teacher Counseling* (Cambridge, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Press, 1950), p. 159.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

into chaos. The students need the security of an adult to set the limits. Nor do we wish to have this kind of permissive atmosphere in every aspect of school life. A structure for our educational process is imperative. The selection of what is or is not essential in content is the responsibility of the teacher and the community. What the permissive approach emphasizes is a greater responsibility on the part of the student for his own learning and a greater recognition of the emotional aspects of the learning process.⁶

Role-Playing as a Guidance Technique

Are there special classroom techniques that the teacher might use for the guidance of students in groups? Let us look at one or two that are of exceptional value. Role-playing is particularly useful for guidance. This technique has been discussed in Chapter 9. If the situation is one involving the personal problems of boys and girls, for example, much value is often derived from playing out the situation.

Let us suppose that the school realizes that one of its problems is the early school-leaving of some of the older boys. A homeroom might play out some of the typical situations involved in this problem. The teacher might introduce the idea, "What is the Value of a High-School Education?" and develop a class discussion about whether it is or is not worth while to stay in high school as long as one can.

"Well," says Robert, "I've got a good job in Mac's garage for this summer, and if I can make good, I'm going to get a work permit to stay out of school."

"You feel it would be better to work than remain in school," says the teacher.

"Yeah, but my old man doesn't agree," responds Robert.

The teacher here takes a cue about an important personal problem, and refers it back to the class.

⁶ Betty Madigan and Mary Louise Steadman, "Accepting and Clarifying the Child's Feelings," chapter xviii in *Fostering Mental Health in Our Schools*, 1950 Yearbook of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (Washington, D. C.: The Association, 1950), pp. 300-312.

"Do many of you have ideas different from those of your parents about what you are in school for?"

A nodding of heads, a look of query and interest, will tell the teacher that he has hit a vital issue in parent-student relations.

"How about trying to understand our own wishes and those of our parents a bit better. Robert, suppose you play yourself for us, and Danny, you come up and be Robert's father. Robert, will you tell us a bit of what your father says when you discuss this with him so that Danny will know how to act."

After some few moments of coaching Danny, it may develop that Robert's mother usually enters into the discussion. Helen is called up to be the mother and is given some coaching on her role in the discussion.

After a first run through the situation, the teacher will throw it open to the class; comments, reactions, evaluations of the accuracy of the portrayal will come forth. Perhaps a replaying will be necessary, with a different student playing the father role to gain greater competence in the words and feeling tones of the arguments. Or the students may start pointing out to Robert that he isn't telling the whole story to his father, that the reason he wants to leave school is that he doesn't work very hard. Out of this may come a reconsideration of the student's stake in his education. Thus, the class as a group has gained insight into an immediate problem, and perhaps Robert has also gained some specific personal help by obtaining a better basis for such a crucial decision.⁷

It is recommended that the acting out of important real-life problems be based on a well-founded study of the students. For example, to put Helen in the role of the mother might have some very important special meanings for Helen. It might influence her attitude toward Robert, but, even more important, it might hurt or help her feelings about herself and her own family. Knowing that Helen is secure in her family, has a jolly and accepting, though poorly educated, mother, might be highly important in helping to construct the role-playing situation for Robert.

One of the techniques to be described below, the sociometric test, is very helpful to use prior to role-playing. This technique

⁷ Robert O. Stripling, "Role-Playing in Guidance Training Programs," *Teachers College Record*, 55:425-429, May 1954.

reveals the relationships that exist in the class and permits the teacher to utilize them for promoting student growth. It would be relatively sterile to have two students act out a typical "snob" situation, in which some in-group feeling is to be expressed, if these two students had no feeling for each other at all. But if two or three clique members are chosen to reveal in-group feeling, the clique may see what it does to others. In such a situation, to go out of the way to focus attention on a tight clique might do more harm than good. That is, instead of choosing those clique members who are seriously at fault in this kind of snobbery and thus exposing them to class censure—which would do little good and might do damage—the teacher should choose a mildly warm friendship grouping. Before doing this kind of choosing, the teacher would need to have a good idea of the friendship pattern in the classroom; the sociometric test will provide this information.⁸

Role-playing is useful to the extent that the group focuses on those problems that are *representative* of the problems of all the group members and those problems that the group *wants* to explore. Often, problems that seem very common may not be those that the class can afford to look at because of reticence, lack of friendly feeling in the group, or adolescent mores that forbid sharing of such problems with adults. The teacher needs to respect these feelings on the part of the class. Never coax a discussion or a role-playing episode out of a class. If there is resistance, accept it. Similarly, if a student is reluctant to take a role, he should never be forced into it. The teacher may make another request later, but even then he should not force the student into the situation. The technique of allowing some individuals to play "prop" roles to get into the picture without too much emotional involvement may ease the reluctance of young people to be expressive. It must be remembered that by the time the student is in high school, he has acquired much protective coloration. He has lost much natural expressiveness and ability to be creative and original and has become more self-conscious, conforming, rigid, and incurious. These inhibitions will often inter-

⁸ Robert B. Haas, "Learning to Read Ourselves and Others: Approach through Sociometry and the Psychodrama," *Claremont Reading Conference, Thirteenth Yearbook, Curriculum-Laboratory* (Claremont, Calif.: Claremont College, 1948), pp. 14-25.

fere with adequate role portrayal and should be respected by the teacher.⁹

Diagnosing Group Guidance Needs

How can the teacher discover the main problems of the group and of individuals in the group? Jennings¹⁰ suggests a sampling technique to obtain clues about group and individual problems. The following questions could be given to a class or homeroom. Not *all* questions should be given to any one class, but the most appropriate for the particular group should be selected. The wording may be adjusted to fit the maturity level of the group.

1. What situations are there in which you think you don't know how to deal with what happens, and in which you wish things would happen differently? When do these situations come up, and who is in it with you?

2. In what situations do you find someone doesn't understand you as well as you would like? When does this situation come up, and who is in it with you?

3. In what situations do you find someone understands you very well, just as much as you would like? When does this situation come up, and who is in it with you?

4. In what situations do you find it hard to decide what to do or to make up your mind what to say—seem unable to express yourself? When does this situation come up, and who is in it with you?

5. In what situations do you go right ahead and have no difficulty making up your mind what to do or say? When does this situation come up, and who is in it with you?

6. What situations come up that make you angry or very much annoyed? When does this situation come up, and who is in it with you?

7. What situations happen to you in which someone gets very annoyed or angry at you? When does this situation come up, and who is in it with you?

8. What situations happen to you that make you very happy? When does this situation come up, and who is in it with you?

⁹ Helen Jennings, "Sociodrama as Educative Process," *Fostering Mental Health in Our Schools*, 1950 Yearbook of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (Washington, D. C.: The Association, 1950), pp. 260-285.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

9. What situations happen to you that make you very sad? When does this situation come up, and who is in it with you?

On the basis of the information obtained through using one or more of the questions above, the teacher can do a *sociodrama role analysis*. He should seek to answer the following:

1. What problems do most students face?
2. What roles do most students feel they already deal adequately with?
3. What roles are they most in conflict with? (See answers to 2, 4, 6, 7. Do father, mother, sister, teacher appear most often?)
4. In what relationship to them are those individuals who seem to understand the students least? Best? (Do teachers, parents, relatives provide most or least of the understanding, as in questions 3, 5, 8?)

In this manner, the teacher may learn what problem situations a given group most needs to have clarified.

A group of Spanish-American high school students who were asked to indicate the problems that concerned them most told of their parents' prohibitions against speaking English at home. The parents did not speak English and felt the young people were trying to hide things from them. As a result of acting out a series of such parent-student conflicts, the students decided that they had been insensitive to their parents and should try to meet this demand at home. The non-Spanish-speaking class members were very much interested in this problem and felt a closer bond with the Spanish-American students. They realized that both groups had a similar parent conflict situation, though it took different forms.

When Is Group Guidance Needed?

Should every teacher of every class delve into the personal problems of students? Clearly this would be undesirable. It is obvious that any given classroom will afford the teacher opportunities for guidance only insofar as it (1) genuinely aids the students and meets current student needs and (2) fits into the kind of learning expected. As has been suggested, a course in English may well include numer-

ous considerations of human-relations problems through the study of literature. Wherever such a focus occurs, the immediate human-relations problems of students are a useful point of departure, but not the sole consideration. Similarly, in biology, the course content may stretch all the way from one-celled animals to problems of nutrition. But only if it is decided that understanding ourselves better is one of the functions of a study of biology should personal problems be studied. In art, the teacher and the students may want to consider problems of personal taste in home decoration, appearance, selection of pictures. These situations involve human relationships and understanding others, and in handling them the guidance approach would be appropriate.

But overconcern for the problems of adolescents is as dangerous and educationally undesirable as complete unconcern with such problems. It is useful for the beginning teacher to attempt to gauge the extent to which guidance attitudes permeate the classrooms of fellow teachers. If the school has few such teachers, then a new teacher may explore some of these areas with more assurance than would otherwise be possible in order to fill a real need. However, if emphasis is already put on such an approach, the beginning teacher may well leave this kind of guidance in more skilled hands for the time being, without feeling that he is neglecting a major phase of the student's education.¹¹

Understanding the Interpersonal Relations in the Classroom

So, far, our discussion has concerned itself with understanding the emotional problems of the individual and with the techniques for handling these problems individually and in a group. To increase the effectiveness of both individual and group guidance and counseling, it is essential that we know more about the relationships among individuals in the classroom. Where people like each other, feel that others accept them for what they are, are willing to share in the give-and-take of daily activities, what is known as a "good group

¹¹ See Harold Alberty, "Guidance in the Classroom," chapter xi in *Reorganizing the High School Curriculum* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1953).

atmosphere" exists. If the teacher is aware of this and capitalizes on it, then learning will probably be more effective. On the other hand, if the group is one where strong antagonisms exist between one group of adolescents and another, where one individual is the butt of teasing and spiteful actions, where many students have no friends in the group but feel left out and alone, the teacher will find it difficult to obtain optimal learning.

How can the teacher gain insight into social structure of the classroom? This view of individual adjustment is relatively new. The development of guidance in the schools came as a result of concern about the individual, and tests were developed to help counselors gain insight into individual adjustment. More recently, as observers of the schools recognized how significant interpersonal relationships are in determining the adjustment of the individual, we have tried to find out just what these relationships with others are.

When Tony entered the eleventh-grade P.E. class in the middle of November, the teacher, Mr. Roderigez, observed that the other boys didn't seem at all interested in him. Often, when a new boy came, the other students came around, chatting about where he had come from, giving him a few helpful hints about the school. But Tony was ignored. On the surface he seemed like any other kid: dressed in T-shirt and blue jeans, average height, regular features. But he was quiet, almost sullen. Sitting behind him on the bench, Mr. Roderigez saw Bill come up and sit next to Tony. Bill didn't say anything, just sat. Bill was another lonely boy. The other students ignored him too. He noted their treatment of Tony, and Mr. Roderigez was interested to see a rather silent friendship evolve. Thereafter, Bill and Tony sat on the side lines together, two "outsiders." Mr. Roderigez was still puzzled, though. He had no idea what it was that made these two boys seem so isolated. What did they do that made the others shy away from them, leave them alone? Mr. Roderigez tried putting each of the boys on a different team, but they still didn't mix with the others. The only playfulness he ever saw them exhibit was when the two of them tossed a ball back and forth together. Then there was much typical kidding and running commentary on each other's skill. But with the other boys, they were silent. Why?

Many teachers often feel just as puzzled as Mr. Roderigez. Here is Jane—pretty, well-dressed, nice manners, and yet no one seems to claim her as a friend; on the other hand, Jill—sloppy, not too bright, giggly—seems to be the center of a whole group of girls and boys.

When the teacher wishes to talk with Jane or Tony or Jill, knowing what it is that lies behind their acceptance or rejection by the group will be important. Similarly, the fact that Joe would like very much to be a friend of Bob's but that Bob isn't aware of Joe's existence may be significant when the teacher comes to set up committees or groups for class enterprises. Perhaps, if Joe and Bob do get together and work together, Joe will develop more security in himself and perhaps will do better work in class.

This network of likes and dislikes, prejudices and tolerances, crushes and hatreds, is always present. Wherever a group of people are together long enough to recognize one another, feelings will emerge about the other individuals. The classroom is no exception. The traditional classroom assumes that such relationships are not important. It is taken for granted that seating students alphabetically to facilitate checking the roll is more important than the fact that, by using an arbitrary arrangement, we have placed Winifred next to Glen, of whom she is mortally afraid, and behind Lois, who thinks Winifred is "a drip." Life for Winifred may be almost intolerable in this classroom; but the teacher is able to take roll easily. If Winifred's work drops off because of her preoccupation with the feelings she has about those sitting near her, the traditional teacher will not know it or, if he knows it, will discount its importance in the learning process. And if Winifred soon starts missing school, the blame will be on Winifred, not on the teacher who was so insensitive to her feelings.

As adults will react to those they must work with day in and day out, so students are bound to develop intense feelings about one another. Actually, the greater emotionality of the adolescent, the fact that his feelings are much nearer the surface than those of the mature adult are, makes it even more important that teachers have real insight into the human relationships in their classrooms.

Sociometric Tests

Two important techniques that enable the teacher to gain insight into this network of relationships in his classroom will be described

here. One is the *sociometric* test, and the other is the "Guess Who?" test.

As its name implies, the sociometric test measures social relationships.¹² This device is so simple that its real significance is sometimes overlooked. It consists of the following:

TEACHER: Tomorrow we had planned to set up the groups for our review of the unit we have just finished. It doesn't matter which group you are in, because we will all be doing the same thing. However, I know that students work best with those they like. So I am going to ask you to indicate on this slip of paper the three other members of this class that you would like to work with in this group.

Put a number one to indicate your first choice, a number two for your second choice, and a number three for your third choice.

Now, in case there is someone you would not like to work with, you might draw a line under your third choice and write the name of this person.

You probably can't all have your first choice, but I will do my best to see that you work with one or more of the persons that you chose.

Note that the teacher wanted a *work-group* choice. For other situations, she might have asked for a teammate choice, for a party-group choice, for a bus-seat companion, a fire-drill line companion, a seat partner in class, a laboratory-table partner, a problem-solving team choice, an assembly-program group choice. The choices the students make will vary, within limits, according to the demands of the situation. For example, Elizabeth may be chosen by many students for bus-seat partner, because she is a gay and friendly girl, but be chosen rarely for work companion, because her work in class is not very good.

The teacher studies the results of the choices very carefully. A chart such as that on the next page helps in plotting the total number of choices a student obtains.

It is important to obtain another view of the social pattern, however. A sociometric test can be translated into a sociogram, which reveals mutual choices, cliques, isolates, and those who are rejected. The illustration on page 571 is a sociogram of a twelfth-grade class.

¹² The earliest discussion of this technique will be found in J. L. Moreno, *Who Shall Survive?* (Washington, D. C.: Nervous and Mental Disease Publishing Company, 1934).

A Sample Sociometric Chart

Chosen

Chooser	John	George	Jane	Mary	Henry	Bud	Phillip	Joe	etc.										
John					3	R	2	1											
George																			
Jane																			
Mary																			
etc.																			
John Dodge The three people I would like to work with in a group are: Henry—1st Phillip—2nd Joe—3rd I would not like to work with Bud.																			
No. times chosen																			
Total score																			

Directions: To enter the choices made by John Dodge, one reverses the weight: a first choice gets a weight of 3; a second choice, 2; a third choice, 1. Then, when all choices have been entered, adding them up gives a quick measure of relative popularity; the higher the score, the more often chosen with first or second choices.

The rejection can be entered in red and added separately.

tensity of choice, *reciprocation* of choice, *accumulation* of choice around individuals, and *pattern* of choices. The class we diagrammed is unusual in some ways and typical in others. Since it is a twelfth-grade physics class, we would not expect to find many girls, nor do we. All the students are college-bound, and the girls are known as "brains." The two girls chose *boys with whom they had worked*. Usually, in the high school, even the closest of boy-girl couples will not choose each other *unless* the class has had considerable group work already.

Why is boy 10 so popular? In this instance, he is the student-body president and a genuine student leader. He attracts the choices of the other students, although, again, no girl chooses him despite his high prestige. Student 8 is a foreign student, shy, with a language handicap. A girl chooses him; so do a number of others. This may be a protective role that the students are taking toward him, since he is so quiet and shy. The teacher did not think he had any friends at all.

Many students are chosen by none or by only one, and they are on the periphery of the class. These isolates will establish few, if any, friendship ties in a classroom unless aided by the teacher. It would be difficult for any adult to stay long in a job where no one noticed him or was interested or friendly. Yet all too often, in high school classes, we ignore similar needs in young people.

Before this test was given, the teacher indicated his idea of the class structure. He picked student 12 as a popular student; but 12 received no votes at all from his fellow students. The teacher felt that no student was disliked; yet student 7 was actively rejected by three students (this is not indicated on the sociogram). Handicapped by these and other errors, this teacher would have difficulty improving the social relationships in his classroom. With the sociometric technique, he, and teachers like him, can do a sounder job of teacher-counseling.¹³

Giving the Sociometric Test

It is clear that this technique is a great aid to the teacher. It is easy to administer; it does not probe further into the private worlds

¹³ Sociogram and analysis adapted from materials prepared by Dr. Fred Pinkham, Ripon College, Ripon, Wisconsin.

of the students than they are willing to reveal. As a matter of fact, students welcome the chance to choose:

In a Senior Problems class, the class had finished one project in which group choices had been based on a sociometric test. The instructor asked the class whether they wanted to choose their group members the way they had before. The class was very enthusiastic in response, since the group experience before had been highly successful. Several students who had made no contribution before had, in a group of close friends, been able to do a very creditable job. The second time the choices were made, the teacher also had a list of topics for group projects. He asked them to indicate a choice among these, and, finally, to state whether they felt more strongly about working on a given topic or working with the friends they had chosen. This gave more leeway for individual interests to assert themselves and met the different needs of the group as well.

The importance of the secret vote must be emphasized. Often the voting that is done in a class is by show of hands; students see whom others choose and are swayed or silenced by the will of the dominant members of the class. By being allowed to write down their individual choice and having the teacher the repository of this confidence, genuine relationships are divulged.

It is very important that the teacher respect the privacy of the choices. It would be very damaging to let one student know that a third of the students in the class chose him for best friend and just as damaging to let another student know that no one chose him for work companion. *The teacher must use this kind of information with great discretion, since it has the power to hurt infinitely more than a single judgment by a teacher.* It is far more crucial for the student to know that none of his peers chose him for teammate than that the teacher gave him a poor mark in deportment. The teacher is obligated, if a sociometric test is used, to protect the students involved. The papers on which the choices are made should be destroyed as soon as the choices have been recorded; the sociograms or sociometric charts should be filled in with code numbers or letters rather than actual names of students. Such confidential material should never be left out on a teacher's desk where curious students can have access to it. The information gained should not enter the gossip channels of the school, but should be relayed to the counselor, the principal, and other teachers in a professional manner as a means of furthering the adjustment of students.

A teacher was setting up a group situation for a quiz and asked the class to indicate in what group they would like to be for the test. In the class was a star athlete, a boy whose reputation extended far beyond the town. He seemed a nice fellow, though irregular in attendance and very quiet and unresponsive in class. He always sat with a group of boys who were also athletes, and the teacher had assumed they were buddies. But great was his astonishment to find that the star athlete was not liked by his "friends." Not one of his supposed buddies had chosen him. The teacher sought out the coach and asked him about the student, explaining what had happened. As a result, the coach and the teacher came to understand each other's programs better. Both worked to help this boy handle more adequately his fabulous reputation, which was hindering, rather than helping, his long-term adjustment.

It is possible that some students, particularly those who fear that they will not be chosen, will develop great anxiety over the process of choosing. "Choosing sides" is often used in elementary schools, and there are always those who are chosen last. For some, this may have been traumatic. The use of the sociometric test may suggest to some students these earlier experiences and cause them great perturbation. Consequently, the teacher should reassure the class about the choice situation by making it as casual and unimportant as possible. By proper introduction, the teacher may allay some of these feelings, as in the following example:

TEACHER: I am going to ask you to indicate with whom you want to work for next week's project. Remember, you don't have to choose if you don't want to. You can leave the choice up to me, but I think our groups worked so well last time that we might as well continue our procedure. I will try to place you with others whom you choose but with whom you may not have worked before, just so we can all get to know one another better.

There is the possibility that the students will compare notes as to who chose whom, but this can be avoided, at least in part, by having the choices made at the beginning of the period, collecting them rapidly and immediately, and then proceeding to some activity that will effectively absorb the attention of the class. Invariably, some students will speculate about the choices, wondering whether their current "crush" reciprocated the feeling. Such speculations are no different from what they would have been without the use of the

sociometric test. The teacher will want to remember that some of the significance of the test derives from the fact that young people are very much interested in friendships, just as adults are.

The first sociogram that a teacher makes is bound to be difficult. It is not easy to see the relationships indicated by the choices, and manipulating the circles and triangles around the paper so that the lines of choice are as direct as possible seems very difficult, particularly with thirty-five to forty students. By making a sociograph (the chart previously referred to on page 570) first, the teacher can see some of the patterns. It may be that he will want to pick out only two or three students and see what the friendship pattern is that exists around them. A magnetic board¹⁴ may be very helpful in setting up a sociometric pattern easily, since it is an aid to moving the symbols around. Sometimes a felt board¹⁵ may also be used. After doing several sociograms, the teacher may not need to make one for every class, because he will quickly gain skill in analyzing sociometric results. In looking for groupings, he will begin to observe the natural clusters that occur, to spot the "stars" without much trouble, and also to note the isolates and those who are rejected.¹⁶

Using the Results of the Sociometric Test

After a sociometric test has been administered, the teacher is often amazed at the individuals who emerge as leaders or those who are not chosen. A classic example of such a result is the following:

A Boy Scout troop faced the problem of dividing up in patrols. When the problem was broached, none of the boys wanted to separate. The leader decided to have them choose on a sociometric test; then he would be able to see what natural groups emerged. Before giving the test, however, he thought it would be fun to rank them in his own mind and see how accurate his ranking was compared with that of the boys. Some of his comments regarding the wide

¹⁴ A magnetic board is simply a sheet of metal. Sociogram symbols are attached to small magnets and may be moved about the sheet of metal at will.

¹⁵ A felt board is made of felt attached to a sheet of cardboard or a strip of wood. The sociogram symbols are glued to strips of felt or coarse sandpaper. The figures then will cling to the felt panel.

¹⁶ See also *How to Construct a Sociogram* (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1947).

difference between his judgment and that of the boys are very illuminating:

"Take the case of G.B. I had placed him first on the list, while the group placed him third, fifteen points below the first choice. G.B. is a nice, quiet boy and seems to get along with everyone. He is the patrol leader and the kind of a freckle-faced kid I would like to have as a son. In other words I liked him so well that I assumed the boys did also. At any rate this seems to be a common occurrence in group selection and has given me a good example for future work on group behavior. . . . The case of D.J. presents even more of a contrast. I had placed him tenth on the list, while the sociograph shows him number two. D.J. is a tenderfoot scout who hasn't passed a test in the past year. He is a rather good-looking kid but has the loudest, most irritating voice I have yet to hear from a thirteen-year-old. All in all, he usually gets on my nerves before the meeting is ten minutes old. He is a good baseball player and a better umpire baiter, having called me a few classic names as umpire when I called him 'out' on first base. At any rate, I just didn't like the boy, but never let him know it. He never seemed to have many friends among the boys and since I was prejudiced against him I placed him low on the list. I see now that he is an idol to many of the boys. They admire his looks, his baseball ability, his ability to get along with his peers, and possibly his loud voice. . . . This case also brought home the fact that in order to understand group behavior, the observer and leader must integrate himself into the group as a part of that group, and not sit on the side lines and look down."

How reliable are the students' choices? It must be remembered that these choice patterns are always shifting. The grouping one week may differ considerably from that of the following week, and the grouping that occurs for one situation will be different from that for another. The teacher will want to use sociometric information in order deliberately to influence the groupings in a classroom. Thus, one use of the technique can be as a check on the effectiveness of developing good human relations. Have the isolates acquired friends? There are some dramatic stories of changing social structures effected by utilizing sociometric insights.¹⁷ Of course, it must be remembered that to understand the many factors that go into sociometric choice

¹⁷ Hilda Taba, *Elementary Curriculum in Intergroup Relations* (Washington, D. C.: American Council on Education, 1950). See also Commission on Teacher Education, *Helping Teachers Understand Children* (Washington, D. C.: American Council on Education, 1945).

requires years of working with young people. A beginning teacher cannot immediately see the dynamics of choice: why Mary gets ten first choices to Andy's one, or why tenth-graders refuse to cross sex lines in choices. There is also some danger that

. . . the visual symbolization of the data on a sociogram will convey to the teacher the idea of a fixed and certain scientific reality. We fear that a teacher may think: "This is it. This is the way my pupils feel about each other; this is the way my class is structured." Such a static interpretation of the data is most unsound and unreliable. . . . A sociogram is a most effective starting point and signboard for launching a study of social dynamics in school groups. . . . Child societies change, develop, evolve.¹⁸

Unlike psychodrama, the sociometric test may be used by all teachers who utilize grouping in the classroom. Usually the adolescents will not consider that too much is being asked of them. To use the test for more intensive research into a class entails broadening the criterion questions to include social activities, team activities, and other areas of group living in the total life of the student.

If a teacher finds a class particularly difficult to handle, if discipline problems are constantly emerging, if teacher-student conflict is very much apparent, a sociometric questionnaire is particularly useful. The teacher may thus be aided in identifying leaders, may find the inner groupings of the class, and probably will find that the class itself is composed of one or more cliques, with others loosely grouped in the periphery—lonely, unwanted, dissatisfied with their social status. With these indicators, the teacher can proceed to plan various group activities in order to obtain a better social structure, one that decreases the loneliness of those on the fringe and uses the leadership of the cliques for positive goals. Under these circumstances the use of student-teacher planning will be held to a minimum; when a class is disorganized, it is futile to try to obtain consensus.

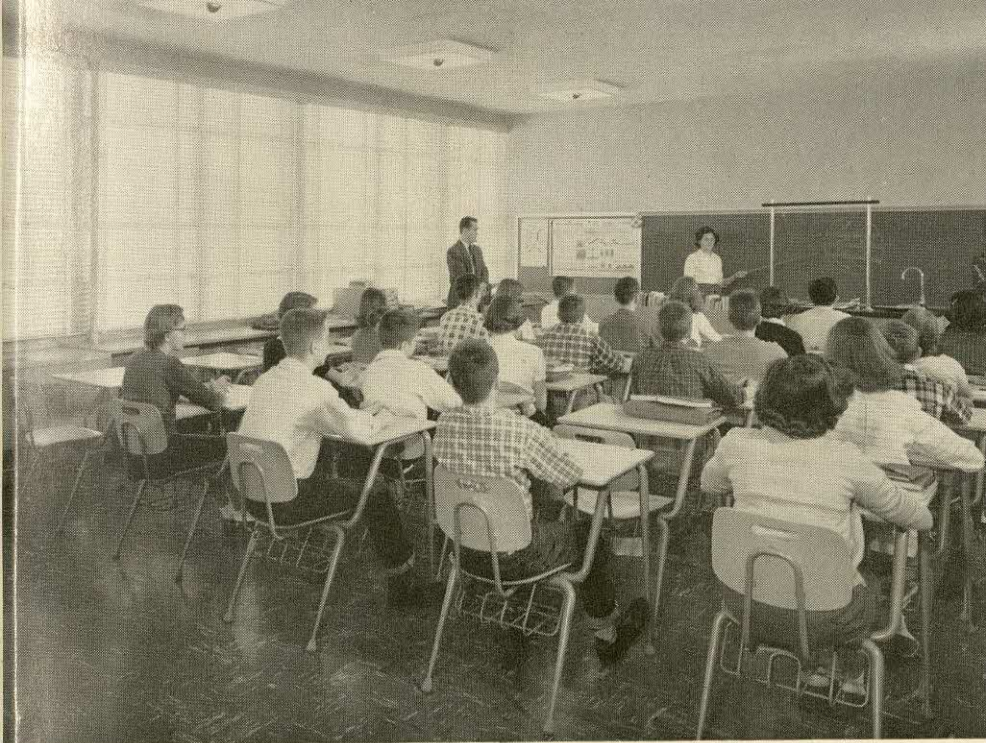
A class will gradually become better organized through using some group activities based on sociometric choice. Improved group morale will permit more group planning. However, there can be no formula for success in dealing with adolescents. It is up to the teacher to be familiar with the many ways of studying and working with

¹⁸ Commission on Teacher Education, *op. cit.*, p. 362. See all of chapters ix and x for excellent material on the use of sociometrics.

Modern school furniture can be an important aid to creative classroom teaching or it can be of no more value than older, less flexible types of furniture. It is a tool of instruction, and the teacher, not the desk and chairs, is the deciding factor.

Modern, movable furniture can help to individualize instruction, can encourage teamwork, can adjust to the changing purposes and methods of the changing classroom situation. But if the teacher is not aware of these potentials or does not know how to make them into realities the new furniture may as well be bolted to the floor, as in the old-fashioned classroom.

The teacher's responsibilities as well as his rewards are greater in the modern classroom. He no longer has the prop of military precision and order and must create his own patterns and groupings to reflect his plan of teaching. What contemporary school furniture—like any other tool—can do to help you depends on how you use it. How is it being used here? How will you use it in your teaching? [Photos by Hube Henry, Hedrich-Blessing, courtesy James T. Hixon Junior High School, Webster Groves, Mo.]





The high school teacher has unique and rewarding opportunities to serve as a guide to boys and girls while they wrestle with the problems of growing up. The solutions we help them work out are crucial to them and can stay with us as proud memories or haunt us for the rest of our lives.

To us, the good sense of the advice is most important, but the first thing the teen-ager seeks is sympathy and an atmosphere of acceptance. We know that the adolescent *will* find guidance; the problem is where he will find it and where it will lead him. If we cannot supply the warm-hearted, perceptive counseling he needs he will go elsewhere.

These two pictures provide examples of the alternatives. In one a mature, attractive woman is working through a problem with two boys who need her help. Busy with other concerns, she has taken time out for something as important as any subject matter she could teach. In the strict sense of the word she is not "teaching"; she is helping, as a wiser and older but sympathetic human being, with the personal problems of two of her students. In the broader sense of the word she is teaching the most important subject in the curriculum.

The other picture enacts a different sort of guidance. Here there is both bravado and furtiveness in the encounter between the "sharp" teen-ager and his counselor. We do not know what they are talking about: the subject could be anything from the melodrama of high school drug-peddling to advice on job-hunting and the future. But would the most innocent help be trustworthy under these circumstances?

Counseling is one of the most exacting and rewarding tasks that face a teacher. Can you remember examples of good and bad counseling from your school days? How will you prepare to fill this role? [Photos courtesy Standard Oil Co., N. J. (top) and Young America Films, Inc. (bottom)]

young people and to be flexible in the application of the many kinds of approaches suggested in this book.

Identifying Peer Valuations:

The "Guess Who?" Test

Another easily used tool to gain insight into student relationships is the "Guess Who?" test. This test was used by Tryon¹⁹ in the Adolescent Growth Study to find out what adolescents thought of one another. Since then it has been adapted for a variety of purposes in a variety of situations. The typical test includes questions such as the following:

Please fill in the blanks in the following questions with the name or names of students who best fit the description. Your answers will be confidential; you are asked not to discuss your answers with anyone. Be as honest as you can. Your opinions here will help us understand you and your classmates better so that our school program may be improved.

[The introductory paragraph above may be changed to suit the situation in which the test is given.]

1. _____ is the best sport in the class.
2. _____ is the student who always knows the answer.
3. The most popular girl in class is _____.
4. _____ is an "apple-polisher."
5. _____ will always help you if you need help.
6. The person no one likes very much is _____.
7. The most popular boy in class is _____.
8. _____ is someone who likes to laugh and be jolly.
9. _____ always brags and boasts.
10. The best-dressed person in the room is _____.
11. _____ has the best ideas for group projects.
12. People in this class think that I _____.
13. The person who always get his/her feelings hurt is _____.
14. _____ acts very snobbish.
15. _____ gets mad whenever you say anything.
16. _____ is a real "glamour girl."

Other questions:

Best athlete

Tells lies

¹⁹ Caroline M. Tryon, *Evaluation of Adolescent Personality by Adolescents*, Monograph, Research Society for Child Development, Vol. 4, No. 4, 1939.

Acts silly
 Acts too old for us
 Acts too young for us
 Is so shy and quiet can't get to know him/her
 Always tries to boss everyone
 Isn't friendly
 Isn't like the rest of us
 Is a sissy
 Someone who doesn't like me

Additional questions may be added.²⁰ The teacher may notice some other types of behavior in the classroom and include descriptions in the "Guess Who?" test in order to find out how such behavior correlates with the student's rating by his classmates

Marjorie may be selected in the sociometric test as a star and leader, but what are the characteristics that are associated with this position? From the "Guess Who?" test, the teacher may discover that Marjorie is listed as "friendliest," as "best-dressed," as the "most popular," as the one who "likes to laugh." He would know immediately what values were held in high esteem by this group. On the other hand, by seeing Julia's name associated with "dirty and sloppy," "always gets her feelings hurt," "always brags and boasts," and by noticing that Julia was rejected by a number of classmates and chosen by only one as a third choice, the teacher discovers some of the personal traits that are interfering with Julia's acceptance by her peers.

It is interesting to note the changes in value placed on traits at different maturity levels; the high popularity accorded one child in the tenth grade for being an athletic star may be reduced as the students move into the eleventh and twelfth grades, when social skills and adequacy in heterosexual relationships come to the fore. Moreover, different socioeconomic groups will value different personal traits. Whereas being intelligent and getting high grades may be valued by the college-bound group, the group that comes figuratively from across the tracks may value more aggressive, less school-oriented traits. The teacher who sees these differences in group values

²⁰ College Study in Intergroup Relations, "Who's Who in My Group" (Columbus: College of Education, Ohio State University). See also Ohio State "Recognition Scale" (Columbus: College of Education, Ohio State University, n.d.).

should be better able to understand the social structure of the class and the dynamics of interpersonal relations.²¹

The "Guess Who?" test requires the same safeguards that should surround the sociometric test. The teacher will want to keep the findings in strict confidence. It is advisable to administer the test just before some very exciting event. In this way, the students will quickly forget the test itself and are less likely to compare notes about their responses. Another precaution is to have someone who is a stranger to the class come in and administer the test. Then, when this person leaves, he takes with him whatever the students have written. The psychological situation then is clearer, and the students feel less involved in the responses that were made and less threatened by the evaluations others have made of them or they have made of others.

Using Test Results

The classroom uses of the information gained from this test depend largely on the sensitivity of the teacher. That this information is invaluable for the guidance of individuals is clear. But, in addition, tests such as the one described here are basic in any attempt to use the classroom situation for the improvement of human relations.

The teacher may find, for example, three students without any friendship ties in the class. But all three choose the star of the class for best friend and also choose the other highly popular class members. In grouping the class for some activity, the teacher may, with some probability of success, place these isolated students with those toward whom they have a positive feeling, and then surround the popular ones with their good friends as well. This technique recognizes positive feelings and provides a basis for the development of sound human relations.

In one tenth grade there were only two Negro girls. It happened that in three out of their five class periods they were in the same room. In all three classes, the teachers seated them together "because of course they would feel more comfortable next to someone of their own kind." The counselor for the tenth grade was concerned about

²¹ Caroline M. Tryon, "The Adolescent Peer Culture," chapter xii in *Adolescence*, Forty-third Yearbook, Part I, National Society for the Study of Education (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1944), pp. 217-239. See also Caroline M. Tryon, "Evaluation of Adolescent Personality by Adolescents," *Child Behavior and Development*, ed. by Roger Barker, et al. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1943), pp. 545-566.

some discipline cases and so conducted a sociometric test in one of the classes in which the two Negro girls were enrolled. To his surprise he found that, contrary to the opinion of the teachers, not only were the two Negro girls rejected by many of their classmates, but each was rejected by the other as well. On the basis of these findings, the teachers allowed the girls to sit where they wanted. As they became better integrated in the class and did not have to "live" closely with someone they didn't like, both girls improved considerably in class behavior. A follow-up sociometric test showed that both girls had acquired one or two friends and were no longer rejected by as many students as before, though they still remained on the fringe of the class society.

Cook²² reports an interesting study in which he shows the sociometric patterning of a class, the utilization of this patterning for individual guidance, and, finally, the class methods used to develop different group interaction and to achieve a cohesive social grouping.

SUMMARY

For effective group guidance, course content must be flexible, with more opportunities for group thinking and planning than are provided by the formal recitation approach. The classroom in which people learn many of the important lessons about themselves and others which have continuing significance into adulthood is one in which individuals act and interact. These lessons can be learned only when there are real problems to be solved and when the students are actively engaged in solving them.

In this chapter we have presented some of the ways in which the teacher can gain insight into the interpersonal relationships of the classroom²³ and have indicated the setting in which such insight may best be utilized—the homeroom and the orientation course. It has also been pointed out that every classroom is rich in human interaction, and that learning proceeds best when such dynamic relationships are recognized and exploited in activities that demand the best energies of the group.

²² Lloyd A. Cook, "An Experimental Sociographic Study of a Stratified 10th Grade Class," *American Sociological Review*, 10:250-261, 1945.

²³ Other techniques for diagnosing the guidance needs of a classroom are described in Hilda Taba, et al., *Diagnosing Human Relations Needs* (Washington, D. C.: American Council on Education, 1951).

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Other Guidance Activities

ADOLESCENCE IS A TIME of great decisions. Shall I go to college? What courses do I need to become an airplane mechanic? How can I best prepare for marriage and parenthood? These are the vital and recurrent questions adolescents are asking themselves throughout the high school years. And here is the teacher to whom students come with these immensely important questions; how can he best help his students to answer them? Guidance involves not only helping a student gain insight into his personal problems, not only aiding him to adjust adequately to a group of his peers; it also involves helping him make life choices among a variety of avenues leading to responsible adulthood. This chapter offers some suggestions for handling the vocational and academic guidance problems of students.

In working with these problems, we must always bear in mind that adolescents come from a variety of homes, that they have parents who provide security or enforce impossible demands, who surround them with affection and regard or continually attack youthful vagaries and flights of fancy. Working with adolescents implies working also

with their parents. Here, too, the teacher is best equipped who takes the approach of the counselor, seeking to aid others in obtaining insight rather than insisting on any answer of his own. In this chapter, then, we will conclude our treatment of the teacher-counselor with a discussion of the specific skills and understandings needed for work with parents.

Teacher Responsibility in Academic and Vocational Guidance

Is there any real difference between the kind of guidance that has been discussed in the two preceding chapters and vocational and academic guidance? The basic principles are the same in all areas of guidance. The purpose of any guidance procedure is to aid the individual in making *his own* most mature choices in the light of the best evidence that can be gathered and in terms of his own goals and purposes. For example, to help a student overcome the handicaps of an emotionally disturbed home and to help that student choose between a commercial or a precollege curriculum are often very similar problems. In either kind of guidance, the teacher will find the same skills, understandings, and insights important.

Teachers have no right, then, to be mechanical and arbitrary when it comes to helping students choose courses, or to generalize vaguely when it comes to discussing careers. These questions are crucial to the student, and wrong choices or decisions here can be just as tragic and irrevocable as any other personal decision. The availability of a mass of descriptive material—college catalogs that list required high school courses for entrance, school program outlines, career bulletins—does not mean that the student needs no help beyond placing a pamphlet in his hands.

The school counselor, where there is one, may be able to supply a wide selection of the publications that provide information about academic and vocational requirements. With his technical skill, the counselor is often able to prepare digests of these materials and make them available to the classroom teacher. But a job of counseling still remains to be done. It is the rare school where an adequate number

of counselors are available to do the whole job. The classroom teacher, for the present at least, will have to help.

Academic Guidance

The importance of academic guidance should not be underestimated. Encouraging a student to sign up for a college-preparatory course or insisting that a boy take beginning machine shop instead of French may set the pattern of his study for years to come.

Studies indicate that students from higher socioeconomic levels and students whose parents have advanced education make up a very high percentage of those enrolled in college-preparatory courses; whereas students from lower social groups, students from minority cultural groups, and students whose parents have had a meager education tend, by and large, to take the commercial, general, home economics, shop, and agricultural courses. Is this a recognition of their ability, or is it a response to cultural pressure? Very often it is true that educated parents understand and pass on to their children a desire for education, while parents with little education themselves do not prize schooling for their children in the same degree.

Financial ability to send a child to college is a great determiner of who goes to college,¹ irrespective of basic intelligence. The teacher who sits down with his class to work out the future programs that each student should take in high school will need to consider carefully the following points before giving a student an "answer":

1. Will this student get home encouragement for the course of action that seems advised in terms of his ability?
2. Does the student have deep ambition commensurate with his ability and past performance?
3. Does the student have a clear idea of other possible courses besides the one he has in mind?
4. Is the student merely following the crowd, or does he know why he has indicated a particular choice of courses?
5. Does the teacher himself carry a stereotyped idea of what students from this part of town or this ethnic group ought to take instead of viewing each individual separately?

¹ W. L. Warner, et al., *Who Shall Be Educated?* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1944), pp. 58-72.

Points 3 and 5 above require some explanation. Many students take a course of study merely because they have no clear idea of other possibilities. When the time comes for making out a program, the teacher should make a special point of discussing at length the various offerings and the advantages and disadvantages of each.

It must be kept in mind that for many students the difference between the elementary school pattern and the high school pattern is so great that the students are thoroughly baffled by the new choices. With a beginning high school group, considerable class time should be devoted to a careful consideration of every subject the student may take over the years, to showing how one leads on to another and what kind of vocational goal is assumed by each sequence.

The point regarding the teacher's own bias deserves comment. Is it true that no Spanish-American student can succeed in a college-preparatory course? Should all Negro students be discouraged from commercial subjects? How about salesmanship courses for a Japanese-American student? There is some evidence that school counselors and administrators as well as individual teachers tend to type students according to membership in some cultural group. They are assigned to curricular patterns on this basis, rather than on the basis of the individual student's potential.

Too many counselors automatically pass the children on to shop classes, or cooking, or sewing if there is a Spanish name on the card given them. Sometimes their stereotyped thinking is upset if a child is unusually bright and aggressive and insists on getting into a certain class. But he may have to fight to take some courses even then. Spanish, for instance, is often closed to Mexican-American pupils; commercial classes are also frequently restricted.²

Let us view each student as an individual and provide for him the kind of help and guidance that fits his pattern best.

Vocational Guidance

In an earlier era, the high school program was considered to be all the education needed for many jobs. Specific programs, such as those in industrial arts and agriculture, were established to serve the

² Beatrice Griffith, *American Me* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1948), p. 167.

needs of students entering such work areas. However, the needs of industry have become so much more elaborate and complex that only a kind of job orientation is now possible in the average industrial arts program. The boy can obtain a good idea of the complexity of many machines, of the simple safety rules, and of some of the skills of working with electrical, welding, and other shop equipment. But for a specific job, most industries today plan on-the-job training of new employees. High schools now serve best by developing an attitude toward work responsibility, an understanding of the role of the worker in society, a familiarity with work routines and work situations, and, finally, by providing an appraisal of the student's own aptitude for a particular kind of work.

In agricultural programs, extensive use has been made of the 4-H Club work. This involves the student in home projects and serves as an excellent bridge between school and home and later vocational pursuit. Similar programs exist in home economics, where girls are encouraged to do home decorating, home canning, and sewing as a part of their education as homemakers. In the commercial courses, elementary typing, bookkeeping, accounting, work with office machines and office forms are able to equip students with the skills needed for beginning clerical jobs. The other course offerings of the school appear to have little specific job application. In fact, so remote is the subject matter of many academic courses from what the working individual needs that many schools today have had to establish such courses as business English, shop mathematics, business economics, and agricultural economics, which are designed specifically to meet the social, mathematical, and communications needs of students headed for a vocation. It is not necessary, of course, for the regular course offerings to be entirely removed from the every-day world. It is possible for any teacher to help students see the job applications of the work in his course. This does not mean that we teach only concepts that have a specific job application, but, wherever what we teach does apply, we make the bridge explicit.

As a way of motivating students to work on algebra, apparently unrelated to their plans for the future, Mr. Jordan first asked the students to indicate their probable vocational goals. He found that members of the class expected to enter the usual occupations. A number were going into farming. Many were expecting to enter the

skilled trades, such as machine shop and carpentry. Most of the girls were clearly interested in future homemaking. He set up ten groups in the class according to broad occupational categories and then asked each group to interview two or three representatives of that category to see what mathematics they needed in their work. The reports from the groups were very interesting. Most of the students had no idea that so much mathematics was needed in everyday life.

Another approach to vocational guidance in the academic classroom is exemplified by the following:

One bulletin board in the chemistry laboratory was called "Careers for You in Chemistry." Here Mrs. Grant posted articles about chemists that she found from time to time in *Life*, in the *Saturday Evening Post*, in *Fortune*, in *Science*, in the *Reader's Digest*. She had the current report from the government on opportunities for girls in science. There seemed to be a constant stream of articles that illustrated possible kinds of work for a student interested in chemistry and related fields. At least once a semester she would bring in several individuals who used chemical processes in their occupations to talk to the class about the training needed. One was a laboratory technician from a near-by oil refinery. Another was the chemist from the city water department. A third usually was the soil analyst from the state agricultural college, who did extensive traveling around the state. Following this presentation, she would encourage several students to see how many jobs they could discover in which a knowledge of chemistry was important. These activities provided the basis for a discussion about vocations and vocational choices. A number of Mrs. Grant's students found a life-long interest in chemistry because of this introduction.

The possibilities of using every subject field to introduce to the students some vocational possibilities implicit in that area should be fully exploited. A foreign-language teacher should be well informed on the vocational usefulness of skill in foreign languages. The English teacher should be able to discuss with young people the kinds of jobs in which a facility in English is prized. The social studies teacher should prepare himself to undertake this kind of classroom study with the students. Familiarity with the Strong Vocational Interest Blank, the Kuder Preference Record, and similar vocational interest inventories is important for any teacher who deals specifically with vocational guidance. Employment opportunity surveys should be made every few years in the employment area of the school. Follow-

ups of graduates on the job will aid the school in keeping instruction realistic and keyed to the changing demands of the job market.

Today, the teacher of adolescents may often have to help youth make a decision about military service. Defense needs of our country will undoubtedly change, but whatever the direction of the change, young men and women will be those whose lives are most immediately affected. Teachers should be informed about the most recent military service programs and guide young people to the best sources for further help.³

Guidance through Work Experience

To help young people going out to work, a number of schools have developed work experience programs. This type of program has been used primarily to provide a minimum of schooling for students who must work. The young student does not entirely miss high school because of economic necessity. However, some thought should be given to the value of work experience for all youth, whether or not financial assistance is needed. One of the chief complaints about the adolescent who seeks a job today is that he lacks a sense of responsibility and fails to recognize the real demands of the working world. Work experience could become a vital learning opportunity for many young people at the junior or senior high school level. It must be coordinated with the curriculum as part of learning about the world of work, about the reality of one's interest in a job (a girl who likes nursing on a sentimental level may find the reality of the nurse's job not at all appealing), about one's ability to learn what will be needed on the job.⁴

Working with Parents

In many schools, only the parents of children who are in trouble are well known by the principal, the counselors, and the teachers.

³ L. Gleen, et al., "Today's Youth and Military Service," *Progressive Education*, 31:225-228, May 1954.

⁴ Milton J. Gold, *Working to Learn* (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1951).

The few parents who are leaders in the PTA are recognized by the teachers; but most of the parents are vague and unknown quantities. Perhaps on Open House Night, or during Public Schools Week, the teacher will meet several parents of students in his classes, chat with them for a few brief moments about what a nice boy Johnny is or is not—and that is the end of the teacher-parent contact for another year. Even on these occasions, the parents the high school teacher sees are often (1) parents of children who are in serious trouble; (2) parents who are active in PTA and community groups; and (3) parents of the superior children in the school.

Normally, the teacher will not see (1) parents whose children are of low ability; (2) parents who are on the fringe of community social life; (3) parents from minority groups; (4) parents from the lower socioeconomic levels.

The desire of the high school student himself very often is to keep his parents as far away from the school as possible. This is understandable. The adolescent is going through the process of becoming independent of his family, and one part of his life which is truly his own is his school life. Here he is beyond his parents' surveillance. He reports back to them only what he wishes to tell them or what someone else will tell them if he doesn't. So the parents get a highly edited version of the school life of the adolescent. Undoubtedly, the wishes and needs of the adolescent have acted to reduce the emphasis of the high school on teacher-parent contacts. But is the paucity of contact that now exists justified? Would students in the long run grow up better and learn more if parents had a closer contact with the school? Much of the adolescent-parent conflict arises out of a lack of understanding of each other's worlds. The school has an obligation to aid the parent, who is still a powerful influence in the life of the adolescent, to gain greater insight into the adolescent's problems, as well as to help the adolescent understand better the world of the parents.

Values of Talking with Parents

It is apparent that the best guidance of a student will be nullified if the parents' cooperation and understanding cannot be secured. As has been stated before, the entire responsibility for such contact can

rarely be left to the counselors. Even if the counselors could carry the entire burden, it is desirable that classroom teachers do an important share of parent interviewing. The values of such interviewing may be briefly summarized:

The teacher understands better those student problems that may arise because of parental pressure or home conflict.

The parents and the teacher together can plan a program to meet the student's needs.

A home visit helps to place the student in his most significant environment.

Securing the cooperation of the parents is essential to any guidance program.

The teacher, by talking with the parent, may help bridge the gap between the adolescent and his parents and help them to understand each other better.

Problems in Talking with Parents

As was earlier discussed in connection with student interviews, the average teacher has little time for conferences. To talk with parents is time-consuming—a single home visit may take all afternoon. Thus, it is clear that no one teacher can come close to seeing the parents of all his students or even a major portion of them. However, if some teacher cooperation is secured, the responsibility for interviewing can easily be shared and the information obtained can be exchanged among several teachers. Teacher A, for example, takes a certain group of parents of students for whom he feels particular concern; Teacher B takes another group; until each parent is the particular responsibility of at least one teacher. This teacher may be able to make one or two home calls a year and perhaps have one or more school conferences. The results of such conferences, if summarized and placed in the student's folder, are then available to all the other teachers. Periodic reports on the conferences to the total faculty would also greatly increase their value.

The elementary schools have been pushing forward in this area in recent years with conspicuous success. Some schools now dismiss the entire student body at noon for a week in order that the classroom teacher may have a conference with every parent of every

child in the class. This sometimes means scheduling conferences in the evening because of working mothers. But the important point is that the elementary school has begun to realize that a good program cannot exist without the understanding cooperation of the parents, and that the teacher cannot do an adequate job of instruction without understanding better the student in his family, and the family's wishes, needs, and problems.⁵

The high school teacher often has the attitude that it is all right for elementary teachers to work with parents, but that, after all, high school teachers need not be concerned about them. Such an attitude is blind, of course, to the realities of adolescence. However, it must be admitted that by and large the high school teacher has difficulty in talking with parents. The training of high school teachers does not always provide adequate orientation to the personal-social problems of adults in our society. Let us examine briefly some of the problems that parents of adolescents face:

1. The adolescent is strongly challenging the authority of the parents.
2. The adolescent is highly critical of his parents.
3. The parents may be entering middle age, and their own feelings about themselves may be going through a period of readjustment; they are no longer physically so attractive as before; there is a loss of vitality; they recognize a limit to their personal ambitions in terms of job, money, or prestige.
4. The mothers in particular may feel less needed; the children are growing up and can take care of themselves; soon they will be out of the home. Housework has lost some meaning and actually becomes less time-consuming.
5. The parents are fearful of the heterosexual needs of their children; they are particularly anxious that they don't "go bad." The possibility of marriage seems imminent, and many parents feel insecure in the advice and help they have provided their children.
6. Selection of life goals on the part of adolescents is a pressing problem; the conflict between parent and child about vocational choice becomes crucial for many.
7. Parents may feel that they have not done so good a job as

⁵ Ralph Eckert and Faith W. Smitter, "Home and School Work Together for Young Children," *Bulletin of the California State Department of Education*, Vol. 18, No. 1, March 1949.

they should have in raising their children. As parents, they may be highly self-critical and have few feelings of success. Our culture provides so many possible courses of action for the parent that, if one choice is made, there may be the constant feeling that perhaps another might have been better.⁶

Whenever the teacher talks with a parent, then, he should keep in mind the particular sociological and personal situation that surrounds the parent of today's adolescent. He is so much more than "just a parent." He is a person who is going through an important period in his own life, which will color his relationship with his child and will also affect the attitudes he takes toward all the other people he meets.

There are a number of basic difficulties in communication between parents and teachers; we list some of them here:

Teachers may not understand problems and situations faced by the parent, as noted above.

Parents are more deeply involved emotionally with the child than the teacher, who can afford to be more matter-of-fact and objective. They speak a different language when discussing the child.

Parents may approach teachers with stock attitudes. Some of these are:

Teachers are superior and I am inferior; the teacher should tell me what to do.

Teachers are peculiar people who have never really lived; I don't think they can tell me much about my child.

Anyone can teach; teaching is merely drilling the child with facts.

Teachers always made me suffer; I am really afraid of teachers. Teachers are something special; I can't talk to them freely.

Both parents and teachers may be unsure of their values; for example, do we or do we not want children of different races to treat each other democratically—it may lead to consequences we are not prepared to face.

Teachers may represent new ideas, the broader world; parents may be more provincial, may not be abreast of new ideas.

⁶ Paul H. Landis, *Adolescence and Youth* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1945), pp. 233-258. See also Caroline B. Zachry, *Emotion and Conduct in Adolescence* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1940), chapter ix, "Changing Relationships with Adults."

Teachers may be afraid of parents; the parent may be critical, and with reason. The teacher always knows he can and should do a better job of teaching, just as the parent knows he can do a better job of being a parent. Two people who fear each other cannot talk easily.

Teachers are not always sure of why they teach what they teach; they do not want someone coming around who may expect a clear statement about "why teach history in units instead of by dates, the way they did when I went to school."

Barriers such as these interfere with good communication between parent and teacher. It is up to the teacher to gain insight into the problem and attempt to overcome it, since it is clear that parents are in no position to do it for themselves. It is imperative that teachers move ahead in this direction, not only for the welfare of the individual student, but in order to assure the forward movement of education to meet the needs of society.

The Parent Conference

The individual conference with the parent presents additional difficulties that we have yet to discuss. On the one hand, the teacher is a person of education, often greater than that of the parent; and, on the other hand, the parent knows a great deal more about the life history of the child than the teacher can ever know. The higher personal stake of the parent in the welfare of the child introduces an element of emotionality that must be recognized. The same principles that operate in the student conference must also prevail in the parent conference. Here are a few warnings:

1. Do not put yourself on the defensive.

PARENT: Well, Mary certainly got along better last year when she had Mrs. Dale for her English.

TEACHER:

(Wrong) Perhaps Mrs. Dale didn't expect her to work very hard.

(Better) She seemed to get along better with Mrs. Dale. . . .

2. Do not put parent on the defensive.

TEACHER:

(Wrong) Of course, some parents see to it that their children have a place to study at home.

(Better) Mary seems to find it difficult to get some of her work done at home. . . .

3. *Do not, by implication, suggest that parents are doing a poor job.*

PARENT: I just don't know what to do with Mary, she is so rude.

TEACHER:

(Wrong) You aren't severe enough with her.

(Better) You feel Mary isn't acting well at home. . . .

4. *Do not act omniscient.*

TEACHER:

(Wrong) Now, with students in this ability group, we always tell the parents that they should take a vocational course.

(Better) Mary seems to do better work in vocational courses. What do you think about this?

5. *Do not sound like a social snob.*

TEACHER: Now we have another student—his father is a doctor, you know—who is one of our top students.

6. *Do not pry into other people's affairs.*

PARENT: Oh, I am so mad at my husband

TEACHER:

(Wrong) Now, don't be afraid to tell me your problems; we are here to help you. What did your husband do?

(Better) Sometimes parents disagree. Now I think Mary. . . .

7. *Be prepared to hear unpleasant, disturbing, unexpected things.*

PARENT: (Weeping) Oh, you just can't imagine the awful things that boy does. Why, the other day . . .

TEACHER:

(Wrong) Why, Mrs. Jones, you shouldn't say things like that.

(Better) These things can be very upsetting. . . .

8. *Be discriminating in the information you give.*

PARENT: Now, tell me honestly, is Mary really dumb?

TEACHER:

(Wrong) Now, Mrs. Jones, no one is really dumb.

(Wrong) Mary has an IQ of 80. That means she is probably subnormal. But there is nothing to worry about, really.

(Better) Mary has many assets. She has a good mind for practi-

cal and concrete problems, but she does not do so well with vague and abstract things. That is why she is adjusting so well to the new program we planned for her. It is wonderful to see how well she can plan a meal!

9. *Do not become a partisan in family affairs.*

PARENT: To tell the truth, Mary would be all right if her father would only stop nagging at her.

TEACHER:

(*Wrong*) Yes, a lot of fathers really don't understand girls very well.

(*Better*) You feel Mary's father sometimes increases the problem. . . .⁷

These warnings to the teacher preparing to confer with parents may be multiplied many times.⁸ As in any human-relations situation, there are many pitfalls. The teacher with an adequate understanding of parents can learn to conduct parent conferences with ease and skill. But it takes experience and a real appreciation of the problems of parents in today's culture. It is suggested that some trial conferences be practiced before any actual conferences are held with parents. With the help of an audience, the teacher can gain insight into what was strong or weak in his handling of the conference.⁹ One suggested structure is as follows:

Describe a strength, special ability, or interest of the student and discuss the educational implications of this with the parent.

Describe the student's most immediate need. Do not dwell on a weakness about which nothing can be done (low ability, physical handicap). The kind of weakness that can be helped through education is the major objective: improvement of reading, development of a hobby, finding a vocational objective, and the like. Get the

⁷ Adapted from Faith W. Smither and Bernard J. Lonsdale, "Interpreting Education," California State Department of Education, Division of Elementary Education, Sacramento, Calif., April 1, 1947. (Mimeo.) See particularly pp. 1-4 regarding parent attitudes.

⁸ Grace Langdon and Irving Stout, *Teacher-Parent Interviews* (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1954, chapter x, "Some Suggestions About What to Do If . . .," pp. 183-213.

⁹ For an excellent description of this kind of training program see Celia B. Stendler, "Let's Look at Parent-Teacher Conferences," *Educational Leadership*, 6:292-299, February 1949.

parents' view of this weakness; what the parents think might be done.

*Discuss your plans for the student; the parents' plans for the student.*¹⁰

It must be kept in mind that most of the parents whom the teacher meets will be mothers. The mother is usually at home during the day, can be reached for appointments at school, and, during most of the child's school life, has taken the most active interest in his schooling. The father, although interested in the progress of the child, usually cannot be as active in school affairs or find time for daytime conferences. Thus the teacher will want to make a special effort to understand the particular problems of wives and mothers, since he will have to work primarily with them.¹¹

Preparing and Planning for the Parent Conference

In preparing for the parent conference, it may help to have on hand examples of the work the student does. If the teacher is wise, his selection will include both good and poor work, in order that the parent may not get a distorted or hopeless view of his child. If the teacher shows the parent one "D" paper after another and then says, "See what I am up against in trying to work with Susy," irreparable damage may be done to the parent-child relationship as well as the future school progress of the student. As was suggested in the outline for a parent conference, it is important to start with positive material, and with something concrete to show the parent—a report, an examination, a drawing, a comment made by another student. This will give the parent a feeling of security. Of course, to follow this immediately with negative material may make the parent suspicious—"He just showed me that good paper in order to soften the blow." The teacher must realistically express the feeling: "John does both good and poor work; we are interested, both of us, in helping him do more good than poor work. Here, I have some examples of his work. Let's look at this very good quiz he turned in yesterday. See—it is good because it shows grasp of the facts; it is neat; he had obviously studied and thought about the material. . . ."

¹⁰ Adapted from Smither and Lonsdale, *op. cit.*

¹¹ See, particularly, Rosalind Cassidy and Hilda C. Kozman, *Counseling Girls in Today's World* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1947).

Working with parents constitutes a new and needed departure for the secondary schools. The reward, in terms of increased school support and improved student attitudes, will be considerable. It rests with the individual teacher to take the initial steps and to make parents an integral part of their child's education.

Visiting the Home

There is no real substitute for the home visit. However, teachers should not drop in on unsuspecting parents. It catches them off guard, places them at a disadvantage, and only increases the tension and distance between school and parents. A note or a telephone call suggesting a time and day for the visit is appropriate. The teacher should previously have approached the student about a home visit. If the student is violently upset at the thought, the teacher should look further into the problem before making the visit. The teacher should also reassure the student that the visit is in no sense a "checking up" on the student, but a very desirable method of understanding the student better so that he can do his best possible work in school. The same reassurance is needed for the parent, whose first reaction will be, "Oh, oh! John must be in trouble." The teacher will want to indicate that he is interested in John, that he feels that John is a person worth being interested in, and that the parents can help the teacher to guide John's learning.

SUMMARY

The teacher who sees his role as one providing guidance for the student will find that there are many ways in which these guidance activities and services are performed. A recurrent need is helping young people choose the proper academic course of study; another is aiding them to select wisely a vocational goal that is fitting. Some thought and sensitivity on the part of the teacher to the special individual problems in these areas can result in significant help to individual students.

But no guidance, whether individual, group, vocational, or academic can promote individual adjustment if the teacher does not

have some communication with the parents of the adolescent. And the parents of adolescents themselves bring special problems to the teacher. In the high school, communication between the teacher and the parent is usually quite limited. Yet the very fact that it is limited is one reason so many adolescents find home and school offering little of real value in the way of adult help and guidance. A teacher who considers the needs of young people will seek to work closely with their parents and overcome those barriers that traditionally have divided school and home.

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The Teacher in School and Community

SCHOOLS HAVE PERSONALITIES just as people have. Pinecrest Union is quiet and serious. Teachers have an aloof, preoccupied air. Students rarely smile in their classes. But Glen Park is another matter indeed. The air is easier. Learning is not quite so grim. Even the custodians act different. Then there is Lincoln High, where the atmosphere is hard to define. It seems to be several schools mixed in one. Large groups of students seem completely separated from the others. There are the vocational students, who spend only a half day in school. The college-bound group keeps to itself in its own classes. A third group, called "general" students, seems not to belong anywhere.

A beginning teacher soon learns the personality of his school. He learns how teachers and students behave. He learns how principals, deans, and department heads act. In brief, he learns that his school is a small society, with accepted ways of living for its people.

And the small school society is also part of the larger community society. Community traditions, pressures, desires—all are reflected in the school. The teacher has, as it were, two homes—a home in the

school and a home in the community. He needs to know his way around both.

In this chapter we will present some of the key aspects of the individual school structure, and then proceed to look at the role of the school in the community.

The New Teacher in the Social System of the School

Even before analyzing the character of the new school, it is important to understand the position of the new teacher. Being a new teacher has special advantages and special hazards. Let us consider the advantages first.

Making mistakes is to be expected. Administrators and fellow teachers are tolerantly expecting the new teacher to make a number of mistakes. The new teacher does not, therefore, need to strive to be perfect. He does not have to dwell miserably upon the early ending of a promising career just because third period dissolved into a minor riot. Being new protects the new teacher from major failure if he is willing to learn from mistakes, but even the new teacher is not excused from making the same mistake endlessly.

Youth means an initial advantage with students. A young teacher may more closely understand and identify, and therefore sympathize with, the problems and potentialities of adolescents.

It is easier to try new teaching techniques. The new teacher is unaware of the restrictions of time-worn ways of doing things. It is less difficult to start fresh, because no one knows what the new teacher can do. Therefore, no expectations are set up.

Fellow teachers are often eager to help. The more experienced may offer advice and assistance, and many will go out of their way to see that rough spots are smoothed.

The new environment is stimulating and interesting. Each day brings surprises and new situations. This sense of new adventure makes teaching engrossing and challenging.

What about the disadvantages?

It is possible to be too young for the comfort of the rest of the faculty. Many of the new teacher's associates will have been teaching for many years. The youth of a new teacher may be a reminder of past promise unfulfilled.

Fresh from college, the new teacher may remind some other staff members of their own shortcomings as teachers. Many of the attacks against "impractical ideas" or "theories of college professors that won't work, of course" come out of this resentment at being reminded of old failures. The new teacher is made the scapegoat for feelings of guilt.

What is routine to everyone else is a major learning for the new teacher. Everyone else knows what to do in a fire drill. The new teacher is as likely as not to march his students down the "up" stairs and bring amused laughs from students and teachers. It is easy to be unaware of what is "the thing to do" when the teacher is new. This requires good humor and an extra awareness of what the others are doing. The new teacher has to watch his teaching manners in the welter of special conditions that prevail in each school.

The new teacher is at the bottom of the pecking order. Where new books are available, they go to the teacher with the longest tenure and greatest prestige. The new teacher takes the castoffs. Often the poorest rooms—noisy, badly lighted, lacking storage facilities—are assigned the new teacher. The study hall just before lunch may fall to the lot of the hapless beginner. He may have no voice in school councils because he is so "green." He has to watch, be patient, and win his place with his colleagues. He can expect few special favors.

Students are aware of his newness. This is one of the horrors that invade the sleepless nights of the prospective teacher. "The students are out to test you," is the traditional comment made to a new teacher. This is only half true; the students do not know what to expect. So they are uneasy, just as the teacher is. But it is true that students will not "just naturally" follow his directions. He must convey his sense of his own security, his interest, and his competence to them.

Although these listings seem to place the new teacher at more of a disadvantage than an advantage, his position is probably no

worse than that of a beginner in any job or profession. As a matter of fact, many school systems are going out of their way to make the first years of teaching pleasant and successful in order that the new teacher may learn the best ways of teaching in his first trials and may be wisely guided when he makes his first mistakes.

Mr. O'Toole reported that his first job was almost too good to be true. He was given two "core" classes—that is, he had two groups a day for two hours each, for both English and social studies. The rest of his day was free for preparation and counseling with this same group of students. How did this ideal program occur? Because the administration of this system felt that the new teachers needed the additional time for preparation and to get acquainted with the high school group. During his second year of teaching Mr. O'Toole was asked to sponsor a club, and he also took one additional period of remedial reading with a small group of special students. But that first year of orientation paid off. He refused a higher-paying job in a nearby community because he felt that in his original school system he was helped to do the best possible job of teaching. That was more important than a slight salary increase.

The Prestige System

The new teacher is almost always at the bottom of the prestige ladder. Of course, the hierarchy varies somewhat from one school to another, but the general relationships are remarkably similar. Science teachers are rapidly moving upward in the hierarchy. The college-preparatory teachers and courses almost invariably have the highest prestige. The coach of the major sport—football or basketball or baseball—may be a powerful personality outside the school if he turns out winning teams, but may have little to say in determining school policies. Where there is a strong guidance system, the counselors may have high status, but still exercise relatively little influence in curricular matters. A strong teachers' organization may boost the current president or chairman to a position of high status in school policy-making. Length of tenure has a potent effect on status; an older woman English teacher will outrank a young man teacher of solid geometry any day. But where the age is the same, the man teacher of the academic subject will often carry greater weight. Many schools, however, are virtual matriarchies because of

the dominant position of older women teaching English, mathematics, foreign languages, and history.

This kind of status ladder is no different in essence from that existing in any business. An institution organizes the relationships of those working on the same program; otherwise, there would be no social order, no channeling of authority, and the result would be social chaos. Every segment of society demonstrates this principle of organization, and the school is no exception.¹ The new teacher will quickly appraise the status situation in the school he enters. He will ask: With whom does power reside? If he tells his troubles to X, does that mean Y will certainly hear about them? Or, if he confides in Y, will his problems be discussed with guffaws down in the boiler room, where the men have their after-lunch smoke? Or, if he waits until he can talk to W, will he get an immediate helpful reaction, a word spoken on his behalf to the principal, and the way smoothed for him? These are the vital elements of social interaction, which most of us accept unconsciously; we have been groomed all our life to make such evaluations of others.²

Mistakes of the Beginner

The beginning teacher will find working with his colleagues most rewarding when he accepts his own status without annoyance, recognizes the realities of the interpersonal network of his institution, and cheerfully performs his own role. As a new teacher there are a few things *not* to do:

Do not complain loudly and at length about the school building, the school program, and school personalities. Old-timers can have all the pleasure they wish out of constant complaints, but the newcomer who voices the same sentiments is likely to draw a cold look and an unsympathetic reception.

Do not voice your opinion on matters of teaching, particularly ideas that are conspicuously "new" or "modern," until after you have earned a reputation of being a competent classroom teacher.

¹ Howard S. Becker, "The Teacher in the Authority System of the Public School," *Journal of Educational Sociology*, 27:128-141, November 1953.

² Fritz Redl and William Wattenberg, *Mental Hygiene in Teaching* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1951), pp. 251-255.

Do not keep on talking about "what we did back at old Tuxedo U.," particularly if many of the faculty are from a smaller near-by college.

Do not dress at the height of fashion. Dress neatly and in keeping with your usual manner. Do not wear obviously expensive suits or dresses that look as though they were bought on your father's checking account and not on your salary as a teacher.

Refrain from gossiping about other teachers. Although you may listen to the talk around you, your own comments are not likely to receive a very warm reception. Keep them to yourself until you are sure that what you say will be understood in the right manner.

Do not boast of your great success with youngsters; but, on the other hand, do not always moan about your failures.

Do not forget that those who give you advice are often your most devoted champions. Everyone likes to feel that his few words of wisdom are sought and prized. Older members of the faculty have a wealth of experience to share. Ask for their views, but not in a fashion that would call your motives into question. Ask only for the advice you really need and intend to try to follow.

Do not run to the principal with every new idea or new problem. Find one or two other teachers to talk ideas or problems over with before seeing the principal. See to it that the principal is informed of your work directly from you, rather than from the grapevine. But this does not mean a daily report on your activities, startling and wonderful as they may appear to you.

Do not fret in silence over a classroom boner. If you suspect that something you said or did may have serious repercussions, be sure to see the principal first yourself, before an angry student or irate parent distorts the picture.

In summary, the beginning teacher enters an institution that is well structured, having a status system, a system of communication among the members, and a distinctive over-all personality and atmosphere. As a new functioning member of this structure, the beginning teacher has his status quite clearly defined for him. There are certain things he can and cannot do in terms of the particular school and its culture. Let us now turn to two other phases of getting acquainted in the new school: first, recognizing the hierarchy existing

among various schools in the system; and, second, becoming familiar with the school traditions that determine the particular culture of the school itself.

Status among Schools

Personalities of schools come from tradition, location, the building itself, the various dominant personalities in the administration, faculty, and student body whose imprint has been left on the school. Although it may be impossible to assign specific responsibility to any one factor, it is very clear that some schools "rate" and some do not.

Emerson High School is undoubtedly the dingiest, most time-worn of the five high schools in the city. The building should have been replaced many years ago; the halls are high, dark, echoing; the rooms are inadequate by any modern standard. The desks are scarred deeply by the carvings of generations of students. It is impossible to write on some of them without several thicknesses of paper underneath. The science laboratories are medieval. There is no auditorium, and the physical education classes have to walk two blocks to the playing field.

And yet anyone who is anybody wants to go to *Emerson High*. When *Emerson* plays its traditional rival, *Washington High*, the game gets the best spot on the calendar, the Saturday before Thanksgiving. Teachers seek "promotion" to *Emerson*. Why? *Emerson* has prided itself for years on being the academic college-preparatory high school; it even resisted putting in typing classes until student pressure had its effect. It still has no shop courses, no home economics courses, only a few business and commercial courses. Students from all over the city are allowed to enroll at *Emerson* if they indicate college ambitions and are recommended by their junior high principal.

The reputation of a school clearly rests on other things besides the building in which it is housed. The socioeconomic level of the school population has a marked effect on the status of the school: the wealthier the neighborhood, the higher the school status; the fewer the students from minority groups, the higher the school status. Although these rankings are obviously superficial, they do

exist and sway the opinions of the public and may even determine the allocation of school funds.³ New teachers in a large school system may find themselves placed first in the lower-ranking schools and then, as they show promise, promoted to the schools of higher status.

Jane Anderson, fresh out of college with her secondary certificate, was fortunate in getting the job. It was a large school system, and very few inexperienced teachers were hired. She found herself at Broadway High School, with the only other inexperienced teacher in the system. Her classes were small—she thought—until she found out that they were made up of the overflow from other classes—the students nobody else wanted. There were some temporary structures that held classes that could not be accommodated in the big building. All of her classes were in these temporary buildings. Many of her fellow teachers pointed out to her that because she was new and inexperienced, she might not get very easy treatment. The school was on the fringe of the industrial section. The student body was a mixture of many ethnic groups, predominantly from lower socioeconomic levels.

Not always, of course, will the administration place the best teachers in the “best” schools. Often, the most creative and imaginative programs occur in the least-favored neighborhoods, where the public is more receptive to innovations.

The Role of School Traditions

A visitor to Ocean View High School on a Tuesday late in May would have thought everyone out of his right mind. Down one hall came a girl dressed as the Ace of Hearts. No sooner had she disappeared around the corner than a boy costumed like Li'l Abner appeared. Behind him was a girl dressed like someone out of *The Arabian Nights*. Indeed, about every tenth student was garbed in a weird and wholly delightful fashion. Of course—it was Senior Jinx Day! At this time all the seniors were to come dressed in some fantastic costume, the funnier and fancier the better. A prize for the best costume would be awarded at a school assembly in the afternoon, followed by a variety program put on by the seniors.

³ L. Warner, Robert Havighurst, and Martin Loeb, *Who Shall Be Educated?* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1944), pp. 75-76.

In one school the tradition that the Big Game rally is to be broken up by a flying attack from the chief rival has the whole community out to see the fray. In another school the seniors have a Senior Sneak Day, a day when they can cut school without being penalized, usually to go to the beach for a party and have an informal sports dance in the evening. Still another school has a special ritual when a famous member of the team has graduated and his "number" is retired permanently to take its place in the archives of the school.

The traditions and ceremonies of a school are important. They make the school unique, provide a personality, command loyalty. To the new teacher, learning the school song, remembering what the school colors are and what the school symbol is, may not seem at all in keeping with the dignity of being a teacher. Actually, such knowledge helps a new teacher to be accepted.⁴

The Teacher and Other Members of the School Staff

One teacher of teachers complained sadly, "Not many of our graduates fail in teaching because of lack of teaching competence, but many do fail because they just can't get along with the rest of the faculty." The relationships between the teacher and his students have concerned us for the major portion of this volume. But his relationships with his fellow teachers, his administrators, and the other adults in the school organization are also important.

It has been pointed out that the new teacher is a special kind of person in the school. But his newness can be forgotten and he can become an accepted part of the group quickly and easily if he is normally observant of the network of human relationships around him.

The school staff gave a party for the young man who was called into service. The new teacher who had come to replace him had arrived just that evening. At first he felt ill at ease and out of place

⁴ Willard Waller, *The Sociology of Teaching* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1932), chapter ix, "The Separate Culture of the School," and chapter x, "The Culture of the School: Ceremonies."

among this gay room full of utter strangers. Even the principal who had hired him was merely a face and a name met briefly at the placement office. But everyone was having a good time. There was singing and good-natured banter. He didn't know who taught, who was a wife, who a school board member. He began to see that they were pleasant, friendly, and interesting people. He walked over and joined the singing.

A week later, when he had gotten to know a few of the people on the faculty, one frank woman teacher said: "I breathed a sigh of relief when I saw you bear down on that barbershop harmony. You looked a bit stiff when you first came in—scared, I guess!—but when you turned on that baritone, I had a feeling you would fit in."

The new teacher must remember at all times that he is part of a team engaged in a common enterprise. He is not alone. He must work with others for the good of the young people and the total school program. A good school is a cooperative venture, where sharing, mutual help, and the firm support of friendship aid each teacher in performing his task well.

Relations with the Department

The organization of the high school into departments facilitates common programs and projects. It also provides a channel through which the principal can quickly get information to one group without having to discuss it individually with each teacher. The head of the department is usually the teacher who has the greatest seniority, or who is the most articulate, or the most politically adroit, or the most competent, or all of these combined. One of the beginner's first tasks is to learn to know this department head and the working relations of the department.

Variations in school policies are infinite. Some departments have great power, some very little; some plan whole curriculums; some are merely a convenient administrative device. Some department heads act with the principal in hiring new teachers; some heads are merely titular, with no real power at all. In any event, the beginner will find himself working most closely with this group of teachers in his own field. He will often find several points of view expressed, sometimes with resulting bitter feelings as a department divides into opposing camps. There may be a strict expectation of conformity

to a set curriculum, in which case the whole department will have a common mold. There may be no curricular expectations at all, in which case each teacher in the department will go his own way. But there is no pattern that can be described as universal. We can only point out here that an understanding of the departmental organization of a school is essential in any attempt to become a working member.

The work for tenth-grade English included a rather large amount of formal grammar. This program was outlined by the superintendent's office, and the English department was expected to follow the outline. Each semester the students moved on to a new teacher. Miss Drew found herself caught in a lock-step progression. No matter what she thought the students might need, the teacher in the department who received them from her next semester would expect that they had learned the required grammar. But Miss Drew found that this class of hers had many very slow readers, students with a great writing handicap, and other problems needing special attention. When she brought it to the attention of the head of the department she was given encouragement to go ahead and work with the students on their special problems. "But remember," said the head, "Miss Scott and Mr. De Paw are going to be upset if most of these students are not ready for their work next semester."

The amount, kind, and direction of flexibility in a school program will derive in large measure from just such human interaction. It is here that change and new programs must have their beginning. Teachers who can and do work as teams can meet the changing problems of instruction.

Relations with the Administrative Staff

The relations of the beginning teacher with the administrative staff are particularly important. During the period of student teaching, the aspiring teacher usually finds himself under the watchful eye, not only of the classroom teacher, but of one of the faculty from his teacher-training institution. Sometimes a student finds himself chafing at the bit, irritated by these other individuals who seek to hold him down. He is unpleasantly surprised that being in his own classroom does not free him from the surveillance of others. And the student who was overdependent on his supervisors during student

teaching is also unpleasantly surprised, for exactly the opposite reason: There are so many decisions he has to make by himself.

The process of student teaching is useful not only for learning something about the feel of the classroom, but also for learning something about working under and with others. The ability to follow the principle of "alternate assertion and withdrawal" in dealing with professional superiors takes time to acquire. The new teacher learns slowly that there is a time to advance the new idea, make the interesting suggestion, demonstrate initiative. But there is also a time to watch, observe, ask for help, follow instructions carefully, be submissive and accepting. A judicious mixture of these two forms of interaction with others will help the beginner establish professional rapport.

Many students who have had the opportunity to work as assistant leaders in youth groups, as Sunday school teachers, as junior members of an office staff, come better prepared to take supervision and direction than those lacking such experiences. The student teacher is part student, part teacher. This in-between, neither-fish-nor-fowl existence is a source of trouble for some beginners. If prospective teachers have never held subordinate yet responsible positions, it would be wise to obtain some experience in this role prior to student teaching or before embarking on the first full-time teaching job.

Relations with the Principal

The hierarchy of authority in the school places the beginning teacher in a subordinate position with respect to school policies, programs, and other school decisions. The principal, to a great extent, establishes the atmosphere of the school. And the principal can be a person of great educational leadership, working cooperatively with his staff in a continuing program of school improvement, or he can be a petty tyrant, wielding an arbitrary authority. The very lack of centralized control from county, state, or national departments of education, reinforces the power of the building principal to establish his own school climate.

In addition to establishing the administrative atmosphere, the principal performs two significant tasks in relation to the teacher.

He provides supervision and acts as a kind of father-confessor. Although many principals are too busy with administrative matters to give much actual classroom supervision, there is a marked trend toward more of this kind of supervision.

Some teachers respond to supervision as though it were an "inspection," as sometimes it is. But most of the time the success of a supervisory visit depends on mutual acceptance of its motives. The teacher who resents such a visit and is disturbed by it can hardly profit from the advice that the principal may give. The beginning teacher, in particular, should welcome such visits since only by discussing his work with someone who sees the total school program can he learn how his work fits in.

Another function of supervision is the rating of teachers. Some school systems make use of rating scales, on which the next year's contract and salary depend. This kind of rating has obvious psychological hazards for the teacher. Probably ratings are more useful for guiding in-service growth.⁵

In obtaining supervisory assistance, the teacher in the small school is likely to have a great advantage. Here the administrative load, though heavy, is still not as complex or time-consuming as that in a large city school. The new teacher who does need guidance and support in the first years of teaching will find it more often in the small school.

In addition to providing supervision of teaching, the principal often extends guidance on personal problems. For the beginning teacher, the principal who is sympathetic, understanding, and experienced is often the best source of assistance and advice on both teaching and personal problems. This is not a recommendation that the new teacher should run to the principal with every small trouble, but it does mean that if the teacher informs the principal about both his personal and teaching problems, he is likely to find support and receive aid. Because most principals find that a contented faculty is easier to work with than a discontented one, they are willing and eager to be of help whenever they can. The fact that they are usually

⁵ W. C. Reavis and D. H. Cooper, *Evaluation of Teacher Merit in City School Systems*, Supplementary Education Monograph, No. 59 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1945). See also Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, *Better Than Rating* (Washington, D. C.: National Education Association, 1950).

older and more experienced and in a position of central authority provides reassurance for the teacher.

The principal may help the beginner combat his feeling of isolation. The teacher closes the door of his classroom at the beginning of the day, and only at lunch and after school does he have an opportunity to talk with another adult. He is quite alone with his classes. This isolation from others is part of the present institutional arrangement in the high school. In some places, where the core program is being used, it has been found worth while to use teams of teachers. Both the social studies and the English teacher, for example, may be in the same room or rooms with the same classes several times during the week. The more typical isolation often results in lack of security. The new teacher usually is bothered by such questions as these:

Are the students learning enough?

Are students behaving as well with me as with other teachers?

Do all the other teachers have trouble at the same points I do, or am I an exception?

It is only when the new teacher checks these uncertainties with the principal that he can gain some insight into his developing competence as a teacher. To keep them bottled up inside for brooding does not contribute to professional growth.

There are other professional relationships that are of concern to the teacher. These involve the substitute teacher; non-certificated personnel: custodians, secretaries, clerks, bus drivers; and specialists in the school: librarians, counselors, health service personnel, attendance and child welfare specialists.

Relations with the Substitute Teacher

In the life of every teacher comes that moment—about 6 A.M., or it may be 6 P.M.—when he realizes that he will be unable to go to school. What happens then? Such emergency absences occur only too often:

Miss Sinclair was finding it harder and harder to finish her lunch. For some reason she felt close to tears, and she saw her colleagues around the table through a misty haze. She thought this all very

odd, and at first decided she was merely too hungry. So she made a valiant effort to eat. But it didn't work. Finally, she got up and hurried out, feeling as though pursued by some malignant doom. Luckily, she found the principal in his office and started to tell him that the world had become very strange, but instead, and to her horror, she burst into tears. The principal quickly deposited her at his desk and called in one of the women teachers. She felt her forehead, popped a thermometer into her mouth, and found a fever of 103°. Five minutes later Miss Sinclair was escorted out of the building and home. She remained in bed with a fine case of the flu for three days.

Sometimes it is a sickness at home, or a frantic call from a parent. But it is the rare teacher who can predict when he will be absent. This means that some kind of preparation is always needed. It is easy for some teachers to plan from day to day, keeping the progress of work in their own mind, but never bothering to write it down or even to inform the students. Such a teacher is the substitute's headache. The preparation a teacher makes to meet possible emergencies should include the following:

An over-all plan that includes weekly and daily activities in as much detail as fits the teacher's own need, but sufficient to guide a newcomer in the general pattern of class work.

A workbook that remains in the teacher's desk so that it can be found by someone temporarily taking his place, containing the over-all plan and clearly labeled as the workbook for the courses taught.

Discussion of plans with students. The substitute is given guidance if the class knows what is desired.

Sometime early in each semester the teacher should consider with the class what is appropriate behavior if a substitute appears. Catastrophes have occurred in classes where such preparation was neglected. Students have been unpleasant, unruly, impertinent. This is totally unnecessary if the regular teacher has the foresight to prepare for inevitable absences. Some teachers find it worth while to appoint a standing emergency committee to assist substitutes. These students are versed in class routines, informed of the week's plans, familiar with the whereabouts of the plan book, and adept at acting as guide and host to a substitute. It is important that this committee be accepted by the class. This requires developing the

idea of such a committee with the class and allowing students to set up the organization and responsibilities of the committee and of the other class members. The committee may never have to function. But if it is called upon, it can eliminate many unpleasant and trying situations. The committee may also serve as class host to any visitors and be in temporary charge when the teacher is called from the room for a few moments during a regular day.

Relations with Other School Employees

Many students, before entering the teaching profession, are completely unaware of the significant role played by those who work in and around the school but are not on the professional staff. "If you get the janitor on your side, half your troubles are over," is a common remark of experienced teachers, "but if the janitor is against you, you won't be able to get anything done for your room." Not only the janitor, but the bus driver, the cafeteria employees, the secretaries, and the clerical assistants are important to the teacher. Although the training of these personnel is usually considerably less than that of the professional staff, they can and do contribute much to the smooth running of the school.

A cooperative, responsible, reliable custodian makes a tremendous difference in the way the school plant operates. One teacher planned to have a meeting in her room during the period when she was free and there were no classes scheduled for it. However, the janitor was scheduled to clean it at that time. Unless he changed his schedule, the meeting would not be possible. Through considerate consultation with the janitor, the adjustment was made and the meeting was held. But often such adjustments cannot be made. The time-consuming cleaning of a school building is accomplished according to a routine that makes for most efficient use of the labor employed. Teachers often complain that this does not take into consideration the most efficient use of their time in utilizing their classrooms as they wish. Obviously, these differences will have to be compromised. Only when the teacher recognizes the human demands of the noncertificated employee will he be able to achieve a satisfactory working relationship. The individual new to authority is likely to abuse it. New teachers are sometimes officious when they should be polite and considerate.

The same principle of considerate treatment applies to secretaries and clerks. The reputations of many teachers are not helped by what the principal's secretary reports about how they treat her. It is the rare school in which such assistants do not work hard and long hours, usually far beyond the time for which they are paid. No teacher is in a position to exact special consideration from them.

Custodians, secretaries, and bus drivers are often experienced observers of the school and the student body. A friendly chat with a bus driver can elicit valuable information about the teacher's students. Similarly, some custodians are themselves almost institutions in the schools they serve. They know more about the inner workings of the organization than many professional staff members. These people are invaluable in helping the new teacher become acquainted with his school.

Some men teachers, when they first begin to teach, will find it financially useful and educationally valuable to act as school bus drivers. The young people are voluble, friendly, uninhibited on the school bus. The quiet observer can glean much of importance about the workings of the adolescent personality. Driving a bus is probably one of the most direct methods of gaining access to the student culture of the school.

Relations with Specialists in the School

Early in his career, the beginning teacher should meet those who provide special services for the school. These include:

- The librarian and audio-visual coordinator;
- The counselor;
- The school nurse and the school doctor;
- The attendance and child welfare worker;
- The visiting teacher.

The larger the school, of course, the more likely these specialists are to be found. But unfortunately, the larger the school, the more remote the specialists are from contact with the individual classroom teacher.

Often the new teacher lacks understanding of the functions of these specialists and of how they can aid him. Good teachers make maximal use of the resources provided by the personnel of the school.

The teacher who wishes to provide for the variety of interests and needs and abilities of his students will require many books, periodicals, films, slides, and recordings. The librarian and the audio-visual coordinator are there to help him get what he needs. The teacher who is sensitive to his guidance function will be more effective if he avails himself of the services of the counseling, health, and attendance personnel. Each specialist has a significant service to contribute. Previous chapters have pointed more explicitly at the need for these services and how they may be used. Here it is our purpose merely to emphasize good personal relationships with these staff members. In working with specialists, as in the other areas of school relationships, the new teacher should be the one who seeks help, advice, and assistance, rather than the one who tells, criticizes, or objects.

The new teacher should seek an early opportunity to sit down with each specialist and ask him to describe his office, its service to the school, what the individual teacher can utilize and how. Establishing a cordial and friendly relationship will mean easier access to the specialist's help. Too often the new teacher finds that when he must make a special demand on the library, the librarian does not even know of his existence. Similarly, if a severe behavior problem suddenly explodes in the classroom, the teacher may need the immediate aid of the counseling staff. The assistance will be obtained more quickly if a professional relationship has already been established between the teacher and the counselor.

Extracurricular Duties of the Teacher

A group of students preparing to become teachers were asked early in their professional program to state what was the outstanding thing they remembered from their high school days. The answers were revealing:

"Being captain of the football team."

"Being vice-president of the student body."

"Winning the interschool debate contest."

"Having the lead in the play."

"Being editor of the school paper."

"Being president of the Hi-Y."

"Getting nominated to the girls' athletic society."

The activities that engage the interest of high school boys and girls outside of their regular class routines are of major significance in their lives. In the view of the teacher these are "extras," but in the view of the students they may be first. The clubs, the plays, the teams, the contests, the other extracurricular activities often command more vital energy than any classroom can bring forth.

The alert teacher is particularly interested in the kind, the quality, and the amount of extracurricular activities that his school sponsors. In some schools these activities are considered prime assets. Other institutions have very meager and poorly supported out-of-school activities. In some schools each teacher is asked to sponsor a club or activity of this sort. In others only the energy of the individual teacher introduces any out-of-class activity. For the beginner, these differences in expectation are significant. "Will I have to lead a club or sponsor an activity?" is an important question. Some schools give the new teacher the same load in directing activities that the old-timers have—perhaps even a heavier one. Other schools will not ask a new teacher to undertake additional tasks until he is well integrated into the school program and feels at ease and competent in the classroom. The latter approach is undoubtedly the more successful, although many administrators are forced, because the students want and need adult direction, to ask new teachers to undertake extracurricular leadership.

The variety of extraclass duties is extensive. These duties include:

Sponsoring clubs and special interest groups.

Advising a major school activity: yearbook, newspaper, dramatics.

Sponsoring student government activities.

Hall, yard, and cafeteria duty.

Clubs

Let us look first at the club-leadership function. Here the teacher should seek primarily to develop self-discipline on the part of the group. A stamp club, for example, with its own officers and rules of procedure, will plan programs, invite speakers, take trips, exchange stamps. The adult adviser is there primarily to advise, to aid new officers in learning their duties, to be the continuing member

from semester to semester, to bring to the officers new ideas and suggestions for programs that may enrich the club's activities, and, finally, to be a guide for new students.

The teacher has the same function as the Scoutmaster in a Scout troop, or the adult leader in a YMCA boys' club, or the woman who advises a Campfire Girls group. The club is organized and exists in order that the members may do what they want to do to further their own interests. Whenever teachers dominate a club, the real purpose and significance of this kind of activity is lost. The greater the degree of self-government, the better for the young people.

The art of being adult adviser to a group is learned only by patient observation, and it requires a real desire to let students direct their own affairs. Many of the principles discussed in Chapter 5 hold true for this kind of leadership also.⁶

Major Activities

The more formal school activities, such as the production of a school play, the newspaper and the yearbook, often put great pressure on the teacher to see to it that the students *produce* something that the public will like. These activities are important to school public relations and, as such, are particularly under the scrutiny of the administration. When students bring home prizes or awards, when parents come to view the play or see the school paper in their home, then the community has something whereby it can—and will—judge the school.

The teacher will find at times that this emphasis on producing something for public display results in undue pressure on students. An uneasy dilemma confronts such an adviser: either to become a dictator and run the student group, or to attempt to encourage the students to develop their own best talent, with the possibility that this may not measure up to public expectations. The wisest approach to such extracurricular activities is of course the latter. But it is not always possible. The teacher must bear in mind the position of the school in the community and not become disillusioned about what schools must do.

The school requires public support, and this support comes from

⁶ For an excellent discussion of such leadership, see Rudolph Wittenberg, *So You Want to Help People* (New York: Association Press, 1947).

the recognition by the public that the school is doing an adequate job. It will take time in any community to help the public differentiate between products finished to adult standards and processes contributing to the growth of adolescents. In other words, parents and others must be educated to see that a dramatic production unfinished and uneven in comparison with an adult performance may have in the process of rehearsal developed security, responsibility, and self-direction in the adolescent cast.

Student Government

Working with student government activities involves many of the teachers in a school. Often each teacher must provide opportunity in one or more classes for student elections, campaigning, and reporting of student activities. The values of student government in developing an understanding of democratic self-government have been accepted by most of the high schools of the nation. But it is a difficult task to help young people accept the limits of their own power in an adult world and, to the same time, learn the significant lessons of responsibility for their own actions. The student government can be a vital and important part of the school, or it can be a farce.

Much of the success of student government depends on the willingness of the faculty to work closely with the young people as guides and advisers. Each new student generation must be educated anew. Every new group relearns the lessons of its predecessors. An honor system, for example, may have been carefully worked out by one student group, but in the space of a few years the whole process of self-education must be done over again. Genuine student government must be allowed to make mistakes in order to learn important lessons.

The teacher who does not have central responsibility for student government activities nevertheless has a basic obligation to be interested in, to be informed about, and to give support to these activities.

Policing Duties

The disciplinary rather than advisory functions of the teacher—being on duty in the hall, cafeteria, or yard at specified times during the day—can be both illuminating and difficult. They are illuminating

and helpful to the teacher who uses the opportunity to observe friendship groups, to note who is walking, talking, and playing with whom, and how the group structure shifts and changes. The duties can be useful when the teacher talks informally to students, helps them, answers questions, and in general acts more as a friendly helper than an overseer out to enforce the law. The more nearly school rules conform with reasonable expectations of students, and the more they are written and revised from time to time by the student government, the easier the task of the teacher having these duties will be.

In some schools policing duty can be very difficult. The new teacher will find that many problems can be solved only as total school problems. The wise teacher will not make an issue of every small breach of school discipline, but will seek to work with students to win their respect, friendship, and confidence. This is the best way of influencing them to observe those rules that are necessary to the orderly functioning of the school.

In any extraclass duty the teacher must remember that he cannot be a chameleon and get away with it. If he is a stern figure in the classroom, he does not change his role in the minds of students when, out of class, he attempts to be friendly and relaxed. The students will not respond. Good classroom leadership will lead to good leadership out of class. A relaxed, friendly, interested, and adult relationship with students is basic to good classroom and extraclass performance on the part of the teacher.

The Teacher and the Community

Becoming used to the ways of the school confronts the beginner with many new adjustments. Becoming acquainted in a community does not usually present as many perils or unknowns—at least on the surface. Most of us, in the course of growing up and attending school and college, have lived in several communities of varying sizes. The increase in mass communication media has made Main Street look familiar as one travels from corner to corner of our country. But surface appearances can be misleading. Communities vary as people vary. This is true whether the “community” is a small town, a suburb,

or part of a large city. Although American communities have many basic values and ways of doing things in common, there are innumerable variations. Regional differences as well as local differences are apparent as soon as one looks below the surface. And every such difference affects the school and the teachers and teaching program within the school.

It is expected that a good community will produce a good school; but it is also true that a good school can help produce a good community. The process of education in our democratic order should be two-way. On one lane the community channels to the school its needs, problems, value systems, traditions; and, on the other lane, the school sends out into the community new ideas, tested skills, trained leadership to aid in the solution of local problems. For this relationship to be productive of the best for both school and community, we need teachers sensitive to community needs, aware of the community as a rich resource for learning, and conscious of the unique ways in which the school must serve the community. In this section some of the techniques for furthering these aims will be discussed.

The Teacher Studies the Community

Alice Bejorsky is going to teach English in Middle Fork Union High School. This is her first job, and the prospect is both frightening and exciting. Alice has a friend who taught the year before at Middle Fork and she writes her for some leads on the community. Her friend responds:

You will probably enjoy teaching at Middle Fork; I did. The town is not as large as the one you have been living in the past several years while at State Teachers College, but at least it has two movie houses. The best people in town go only to the Bijou; but the kids seem to like the Star better, because it has all the Westerns. There is only one paper, a weekly, but I would advise you to subscribe to it because it has all the local gossip; who had a baby, who is going to be married, who died, who went to the Lodge meeting Tuesday night, etc. I'd keep an eye out for old Mrs. Stripe because, between you and me, she really runs this town. I think she is related to every official that was ever elected—maybe that's why they were elected! Anyway, she is a real nice soul, but I'd try not to get in her way. There are a couple of apartments that you might get if you share

one with another teacher, but Mary Small lived alone last year and the tongues really wagged. Be sure to bring lots of warm clothing, because it is terribly cold in the winter and I think they skimp on heat in the school. You will like most of the faculty as long as you don't try to tell them how much you know. The principal is really a great guy and will give you a lot of help. Keep an eye out for Bob Brown; they say he is a wolf but I wouldn't know!

Best wishes,
Sue

After her first few months at Middle Fork, Alice writes Sue:

Your preliminary bird's-eye view was not very far wrong. You were right about Mrs. Stripe. But Sue—the things there are that you have to find out about a new community! I read the weekly sheet avidly because it tells me a lot about the juniors I have in my three English classes and two math classes. But you know, you didn't tell me the town was so bitter about not winning the football pennant last year. I'm afraid that poor Joe will lose his job as coach. Also, there is a strike at the cannery, and it is impossible—I think—to read and discuss that short story in our literature anthology about the labor leader. I really don't dare at this point. It amazes me how weather can affect you—here the weather conversation is all about the effect of the rain on the subsoil water level—it seems to be sinking, or something. At home we didn't worry about rain except if it was going to spoil a picnic! I guess that is the difference between a farm town and a suburban town. I didn't get an apartment, but was able to get room and board with one of the older married teachers, Mrs. Denny. She and her husband are very nice to me and I certainly get all the school scoop. But I don't think the principal is quite the wonderful fellow you thought him; at least he hasn't bothered much about me. The students certainly are interested in my private life. I think I will scream if another one coyly asks whether I am engaged or not!

More later,
Alice

There is a moral to be drawn from these two letters. Each community looks different to different people. Someone who knows a town can give you some idea of what it is like, but each person sees some things and neglects others. A cursory observation of the town will not provide the future teacher with what he needs to know about the community.

Each of us carries a memory of his home town and assesses

other communities against it. Yet what we know of our own town is its inner life; we know who is who, who counts and who doesn't. When we go into a new and strange community, all we see is the outer appearance. Unfortunately, if New Town looks like our own home town, we may delude ourselves into thinking it probably is very much the same, the kind of town we would, or would not, like to work and live in. Appearances are so deceiving! A nice maple-lined Main Street may look comfortable and inviting; yet the town may be smug, indifferent to the school, dominated by ingrown provincial leadership. On the other hand, a barren, dusty, wind-swept community that looks as though no one stayed long enough to grow a sunflower may be a vital, interesting, sophisticated place in which to teach. As striking a difference in attitude may exist even between neighboring suburbs or adjoining sections in a large city, though in appearance these may be very similar.

The teacher, for the good of his teaching life, needs to be able to get below surfaces, to be sensitive to the real community. This is the only way he can know whether this is where he ought to teach, and the only way he can judge whether the community will accept him and his ideas about teaching. To see for oneself, then, is to see with a trained eye. Some suggestions about what to look for will be given later. But first, an aside to those teachers who are married. One principal remarked:

In our community we have begun the practice of interviewing the wives of prospective teachers, not just the men themselves. Our community is a good one—for some kinds of people. It is isolated. The social life is not very extensive. You have to be the kind of person who is happy tending your own garden or joining in the simple pleasures of an evening of bridge, or you won't like it here. So many of our teachers have left because their wives were not happy, through no fault of the community, but just because they were big-city gals and this is a small oil town.

The community is important to the teacher's family, and the happiness of the teacher's family is vital to his success in teaching. It is often wise for a beginning teacher to arrange for his wife (or husband, as the case may be) to get a chance to see what lies ahead and agree with him (or her) about the community.

And a warning to the unmarried! The girls going out into

teaching will be looking forward to marriage with or without a continuation of their careers. And if marriage is equal in importance to a career, or of greater importance, then the girl should consider the communities in which she chooses to teach accordingly. Going to an isolated rural community means that contact with eligible educated bachelors will be limited—very limited. The unmarried woman teacher might well choose a lesser-paying position, or one less advantageous in other ways, which offers a wider opportunity for meeting marriageable young men. In lesser degree, the unmarried man must exercise similar care in his choice of a community.

Responsibilities of the School to the Community

The modern teacher recognizes the limits that the community places upon the school, although it is more appropriate to term these limits the *responsibilities* that the school has to the community. In one town the schools are the leaders in community progress; in an adjoining community the schools may be so far behind the times that the citizens are beginning to complain. But whether the schools lead, follow, or preserve the status quo, the individual teacher must clearly know what the role of this school is in this community.

The beginning teacher leaves the college with many ideas and ideals regarding teaching, but he will be doomed to bitter disappointment if he does not realistically appraise the communities in which he teaches. He must sense how much of his idealism can be operative, or how far short of community needs his own view of education may be. In one community a unit on personal grooming may be very welcome to the parents and students; in another such a unit would be considered an affront to the students or an invasion of the prerogatives of the parents. Thus, selection of content as well as methods is often a function of community expectations and acceptances.

For personal orientation, the beginning teacher seeks answers to such questions as these:

How does the community feel about the high school? What does it like in the school? Of what is it critical? Which teachers seem to have the highest prestige in town?

What are the sensitive spots in this community? Unions, minority groups, working mothers, slums, old-timers vs. new residents,

migrants, foreign-language groups, town improvements, public vs. private utilities, industry vs. agriculture?

What are the "prevailing sentiments?"⁷ What are the attitudes toward national policy issues, toward foreign relations, toward local institutions?

What are the major community loyalties? What forces tie the community together, if any? Who are the local leaders? What do they represent? How stable is this leadership? What major community groups are not represented?⁸

Deliberate education can occur when the teacher is well informed about the community. The community may have a conflict between industrial and agricultural interests which is interfering with community growth. Yet children of both groups are in the school. The teacher with a long-range view would be sure to study the role of both industry and agriculture in building the nation. He would develop the idea that both groups can work together and would help students read critically in local sources about local problems that impinge on this conflict. Then coming generations would not be ignorant heirs to the mistakes of their forebears.

Guides to Understanding the Community

The major sources for gaining intimate community knowledge are easily accessible. The following guides are suggested for a beginning teacher:

What does the school community look like? Walk down the principal thoroughfare early in the morning—are the commuters rushing to the trains, or are the farmers coming in for their morning shopping? Walk down the street again at dusk; again at midnight. Who is in town during the week late at night? What is the night life over the weekend?

Drive slowly around all the neighborhoods. Where do the "best" people live? Where are the poorer sections? Where do the newcomers buy homes? Are there large apartment-house districts?

⁷ Alexander Leighton, *The Governing of Men* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1945).

⁸ Floyd Hunter, *Community Power Structure* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1953).

Drive the school bus routes. How different are the environments of the students?

Read the local newspaper. Long before a teacher moves to town, if he subscribes to the local newspaper, he can quickly get a vivid picture of the "real" news of the community. What kinds of events make the front page? What columnists are syndicated for this community? What are the editorial attitudes? What school news seems important? To find the leaders of the local social whirl, the teacher can keep a little notebook in which he jots down the names of those who make the society news frequently. He will soon find out that Mrs. X is very active, and Mr. Y is prominent in local organizations. He should also look for groups whose news does *not* appear: unions, minority groups, and the like.

Interview local leaders. The new teacher should make a point of talking casually or formally with the major individuals in the school community. The larger the city, the harder this will be, of course, but in a moderate-sized city it is very useful for the teacher to know what the sentiments are of those who count in local life. In such an interview the leading question should be, "I am a newcomer here; what is it important for me to know about this town?"

Locate sources of descriptive and statistical materials. Visit the chamber of commerce, the city hall, the library, the planning commission. These visits will yield important data regarding the history and present status of the community. The chamber of commerce will be able to point out what the community is most proud of. The library will have documents and materials on local celebrities and local history. Locating the community in the U.S. Census reports is helpful.

There are a number of school systems that recognize the value of community orientation so well that a special program is outlined for new teachers. Special booklets are prepared and sent to the new teacher prior to his coming to the town. Such programs are very useful, but they are still rare enough so that the teacher cannot depend on them to do the job for him. Furthermore, such an introduction, valuable as it may be, can show only a select side of the community. Each new teacher will therefore want to see the community for himself, form his own judgments, and then check these

against the experiences and judgments of those who have lived and taught in the community for a number of years.

Using Community Information in the Classroom

The application of the information and understandings gained about the community to actual classroom teaching is the important next step. "So what?" asks the beginning teacher. "If I know that the community is very recreation-minded and spends more per capita on playgrounds than any other city its size, what effect does that have on my teaching?"

The community-oriented teacher does make use of his knowledge. He would know that a study of recreation in a senior problems class would be welcomed by the community. If he led a hobby club after school, he would know that the community would support it eagerly. He would know that student-conducted opinion polls about the recreation program would be given wide cooperation. He would know that a unit on family recreation, personal recreation, developing wide recreational interests, would probably not be criticized in English, art, or history classes. He would know that he could use statistics about recreation programs, local and national, in his mathematics class, and critics of "modern" education would accept the practice as "sound."

Knowing something about what the community prizes guides the teacher to new resources for learning. The many ways in which the community can be used to enrich classroom learning have been described in detail in Chapter 8. The wise teacher will orient himself to the community as part of his job, and then select those in the light of his growing knowledge of the total community, resources which, can best be utilized to further teaching aims.

Community Education as a Continuing Process

Before we conclude this section, it might be well to develop briefly two closely related concepts. First, in each community where the teacher goes to teach, learning about the community must be begun all over again. And second, in order to understand adolescents

and their culture, the teacher must periodically immerse himself in *their* culture, as it is manifest in the larger community.

Teachers sometimes yield to the fallacy that, having known one community well, others are merely variations on the same theme. This is of course only a partial truth. Teachers may, by learning about one community, learn best *how* to learn about communities, but the answers they obtain will never be the same twice running. Thus, the process of gaining community understanding will remain necessary whenever one enters a new teaching community.

But it is not only necessary that teachers learn about the adult community. Margaret Mead has wisely suggested that one of the basic needs for continuing professional competence is to go out, as a teacher, every few years, and relearn the peer culture that so potently presses upon the young. Where cultural change on some levels is as rapid as it is in our society, the teacher, above all others, must be aware of the direction and pattern of change.⁹

SUMMARY

In this chapter we have discussed some of the special relationships between the teacher and other members of the staff and some of the special out-of-class demands on the teacher. The new teacher enters an institution in which relationships are fairly well ordered and follow a hierarchical pattern. As a newcomer, he finds himself at the bottom of the order. He is an outsider in relation to the school and its culture; its traditions are new and strange and sometimes difficult to fathom. He moves into a series of new personal commitments to others of his professional peers and administrative superiors.

It is significant that the high school is, by and large, encouraging to the newcomer. He finds many others dedicated to their task, working far beyond anything remuneration could cover, and eager to enroll the beginner in the process of educating the young citizen for a democratic social order.

The school community is an integral part of the larger community. It is only as the teacher learns about the ways of life outside

⁹ Margaret Mead, *The School in American Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1951).

the school that he can most effectively understand and educate the youth who are a product of that community.

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Becoming a Teacher

TEACHING is more than techniques. The best knowledge of all the ways of conducting a class will not alone produce a teacher. Nor will scholarly competence guarantee success, although obviously it takes first priority in preparation for teaching. At the same time, in our earlier discussion of student teaching, we rejected the idea that "teachers are born, not made." If this were true, there would be no need for courses in education, there would be no science of education, no educational research. We would merely have to develop a routine that could separate those who were born teachers from those who were not. But we know that this is far from being the case. Those who seem to be born teachers actually have often had better opportunities to be "teachers" during their years of growing up: leading groups, helping their own brothers and sisters, tutoring other students because the teacher needed help. They learned through experience the feel of teaching. Most of us, however, have had few teaching opportunities. Even student teaching does not reassure us completely. We still have some unresolved doubts.

Fears of the Beginning Teacher

Mr. Gordon faced his class alone for the first time. He looked at thirty-five adolescents, of all shapes, sizes, and appearances. Visions of the horror stories that he had heard from other teachers about the wild mischief these students could perpetrate rose before his eyes. "What if they won't keep still when I ask them to? What if a boy starts getting fresh? What will I do if a girl bursts out crying?" These thoughts flashed through his mind in the instant the final bell rang. "I'll get them busy at something, then they can't get into trouble—anything to keep them in their seats, quiet . . ."

Another teacher reported:

The first time I met the other faculty members, they said to me, "Be stern the first month. Don't smile or be easygoing. Then you can relax and take it easy. But you have to be tough with them immediately or they will try to get away with all kinds of things."

Still another:

As the teacher of the "special class" in which were placed the worst behavior problems, Miss Smith had a rigid daily routine. The boys—and they were always boys—were given more problems to work than anyone could finish. These were turned in every day. She always threw most of them out; but about once a week she would correct a set of them and scold the class roundly for doing such poor work. "I know it is mostly busywork," she said, "but if I don't keep them as busy as possible, they will get into all kinds of mischief."

These incidents point to one of the central problems of beginning teachers: fear of the teaching situation. For many years we have been students—receiving the assignments, more or less conscious of the rest of the class, seeing the teacher as a rather remote, sometimes pleasant, sometimes unpleasant person. Suddenly, the positions are reversed. As the teacher, we are acutely aware of the thirty or so different personalities that must be kept together as a group. We remember all too vividly the kinds of trouble we gave teachers in times past; and subconsciously we are troubled often enough by memories of the hatred, antagonism, resentment we felt toward teachers. We wonder what the students are thinking about us. We wonder what unexplored avenue of experience they may open to reveal our incompetence. We recognize belatedly that we may have

been rather quiet, bookish people throughout our lives. We think ruefully that we have held only modest leadership roles. We are dismayed at our temerity in choosing teaching at all. We thought that student teaching would put an end to our anxieties. But here we are, still with some insecurities.

It is encouraging to learn that these feelings are common. Most beginning teachers are frightened of the class; and most beginning teachers soon get over it. But gaining an understanding of the common fears, facing and acknowledging them beforehand, will aid the beginner when they are encountered in reality.

The beginning teacher may gain further reassurance by remembering the years of conditioning that have already occurred. The students are not likely to rebel very much. As was discussed in the section on discipline (Chapter 15), trouble comes when trouble is expected; if a teacher has a thorough expectation of harmony and a workmanlike atmosphere, good order is more likely to develop. Teachers who expect trouble may be tempted to resort to punitive methods. "They work," they say. "I try to be nice to the students and I just get chaos, but when I crack down, then everything is orderly."

Dictatorships *are* orderly. But as a people, we are committed to a different way of living. In the classroom we cannot teach the words of democracy and live the life of autocracy. It is more difficult to secure good order through good management in which students share responsibility, but it is the only defensible course to take. This is not to say that the teacher should abdicate his leadership (see Chapter 5), but it must not be rigid and unyielding. The best psychological preparation for good leadership is to admit frankly, "I may have some fears, but they are not going to betray me into becoming a petty tyrant."

Motives for Entering Teaching as a Life Work

Once this hurdle—the fear of the teaching situation—has been faced, the beginning teacher will want to re-examine his motives for choosing teaching as a career. Most choose teaching because of an

interest in service, because of the contribution they can make to society.¹ Other important factors that encourage individuals to enter teaching are the influence of teachers in their immediate family, an admiration for a teacher they have known, an opportunity to work closely with young people. Interestingly enough, most of the studies of motivation for entering the profession give a rather low ranking to purely selfish interests: security, long vacations, improving social position.

For the family man or woman, the profession of teaching offers far greater opportunities to be an active parent than most other jobs in today's world. To anyone with a deep interest in his own children, the opportunity to work closely with young people is an important consideration. Teaching is also one of the few professions that permit a married woman to share school vacations with her children. Many women students who remain out of teaching during the early years of their children's growing up return to teaching with the happy feeling that in this way they deepen their understanding of young people.

Many teachers are motivated to enter the profession because of teachers they knew. One woman became an English teacher because she was convinced that English could be vital and interesting; she wanted to prove this because of the dull and deadly English teachers she herself had had. More often, the decision to enter teaching has been influenced by the memory of a well-loved teacher. One precaution is important when beginning teachers try to model themselves after the memory of some special teacher. If the student has a similar personality, all may be well; but often, as youngsters, we admire deeply those who are least like us. Thus, we may want to be the gay, sparkling, understanding teacher who helped so much when we were in school, when we are really rather slow, quiet people. The effort to be like the model may lead to discouragement, because anything less than this ideal may appear as failure. It is wisest to capitalize on personality strengths already developed.

Others enter teaching because there have been teachers in the family. For some, living up to a family tradition can be very challenging; for others, it may be very discouraging. The choice of teaching

¹ C. H. Threlkeld, "Problems in the Recruitment and Adjustment of Teachers," *Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals*, 32:169-175, March 1948.

may not have been freely made. "All girls in our family are teachers" may actually be emotional blackmail exercised on one who is not interested in, or stimulated by, teaching. In that case, recognizing frankly both one's own unwillingness to become a teacher and the compulsion of powerful family or group pressures may mitigate the conflict. Accepting this life decision, even though in some respects it is not a first choice, may help remove one barrier to effective teaching.²

Some future high school teachers may be attracted to teaching by the power and authority that can be exercised. This is different from becoming a tyrant because of fear of disorder. This is becoming a tyrant because one enjoys ordering others around. It is necessary, of course, that the teacher accept his own authority. Good order rarely prevails in the classrooms of teachers who really do not want either responsibility or authority. But we must repeat: Domination for its own sake will not aid young people to acquire skill in making their own decisions. And in our culture, we prize that ability highly.

Then there are the teachers who feel that those who really succeeded are those who were able to enter college teaching. To these teachers, many high school students are disappointments. They are distressingly uninterested in the more specialized concepts of a field of knowledge. This type of teacher can pattern his teaching in one of three ways: (1) He can teach his subject only for those chosen few who are bright and interested enough to respond; (2) he can teach in a comfortable rut; or (3) he can find new stimulation in making his chosen subject important to the average and slow student as well as the brilliant. We can only hope that, eventually, he will choose the third course.

When we consider the whole problem of motivation on the part of the teacher, it becomes clear that good teaching and learning occur when the teacher's needs and feelings do not conflict with those of the students. If the students desire to learn, but the teacher resents his role as instructor, it will be difficult to create a good learning situation. There need not be conflict, of course. The good teacher derives genuine satisfaction from teaching, and the students gain real satisfactions from learning and living in his classroom.

² Esther Lloyd-Jones, "Why People Become Teachers," in Lindley Stiles, ed., *The Teacher's Role in American Society*, Fourteenth Yearbook of the John Dewey Society (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), pp. 235-246.

Relations with Students

No professional person can disregard the expectations about his conduct which have developed over a long period of time. A teacher of the young has long been expected to represent the best in mature living. Parents expect him to furnish an example of how a good citizen behaves. They may hold higher standards for the teacher than they hold for themselves.

Students reflect similar anticipations. They do not expect or desire a teacher to behave like an adolescent. They do not even really want him to permit them the liberties they sometimes seem to strive so hard to gain. Above all, they do not expect him to be a "pal." They want to respect him as an adult.

For a beginning teacher, only four or five years out of high school himself, this is a radical change of role. No one has ever looked to him for this kind of consistent maturity before. His parents have thought of him as still not much more than a boy. All through college he has been permitted, even expected, to be somewhat juvenile. The pranks and escapades of college youth, from goldfish-eating to panty raids, are traditional. And now, suddenly, he is a teacher, and all that immaturity must be expunged. He is to be an exemplar of good sense, moderation—even wisdom.

Little wonder, then, that the young teacher fits himself into his role with some uncertainty. He may try so hard to be mature that he is excessively serious, humorless, almost grim. Or he may go to the other extreme and try to be more extravagantly juvenile than ever. Either reaction is, of course, seriously in error. No teacher need be unbending. Mature persons can be human, warm, alive. No teacher can be juvenile. His relations with both parents and students will rapidly deteriorate.

All the beginning teacher needs to be is himself—provided it is the *adult* himself. He will be expected to take a while to act with consistent maturity. But there must be no mistake about the direction in which he is moving.³

Sometimes high school students develop a "crush" on a teacher. It is a kind of puppy-dog admiration, in which the adolescent per-

³ Arthur T. Jersild, *When Teachers Face Themselves* (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1955).

petually tags around after the teacher. One explanation for this attachment: "The young person who is very insecure may turn to crush and hero-worship relationships with exaggerated devotion in effort to gain, outside the home, satisfaction which he has been unable to find there."⁴ Sometimes the adulation is for a teacher of the same sex, sometimes for one of the opposite sex. The student may go to embarrassing extremes in trying to make himself known to the teacher and in doing things for the teacher:

The young adolescent girl tends to identify herself wholeheartedly with an admired older girl or woman. She usually shows less reluctance than the boy to recognize that she is infatuated with her teacher, for example. She is likely to be more interested in her experience than in the object of her affections. Among her girl friends she sings the praises of her "crush," blushes when her name is mentioned, and enjoys being teased about her devotion. To the object of her fondness she is likely to show her feelings openly—writing notes, giving presents.⁵

What should the teacher do about it? If the teacher he selects is understanding and emotionally mature himself, then the adolescent will move on to the next stage in his emotional development: finding a partner of the opposite sex and making warm friends among both sexes. However, for the teacher who himself needs such devotion and so forgets why the adolescent acts the way he does, there may be unhappy consequences. The adolescent obviously needs to outgrow the crush. The teacher who perpetuates it may doom the student to immature emotional responses for many years to come. This is not to say the teacher should maintain a kind of dignified aloofness. The middle-of-the-road course is the wisest. The teacher should show genuine kindness, accept the attention, but not encourage the crush or expect it to last. The teacher might well go out of his way to help the student mix more with his classmates, arranging class leadership roles for the student to ensure him more recognition.

The student needs to be accepted by the individual whom he has identified as his model, because this facilitates his emulation of adult traits. If the teacher rejects him, then the student may become confused about the kind of adult he wishes to become. Some teachers may be offended and possibly disturbed by the homosexual overtones

⁴ Caroline B. Zachry, *Emotion and Conduct in Adolescence* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1940), p. 336.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 114.

that may be present in some of the crushes—for example, if an obviously “sissy” boy trots after the debate coach like a devoted puppy, or if a masculine girl can hardly be pried out of the door long after all other students have gone home.

It is possible that for a minority of students a grave problem of finding their appropriate sex roles exists. Again, rejecting the student because of drives that are personally repugnant to the teacher will only make it less possible for the individual to work out his problem. The understanding teacher will seek outside help from trained psychologists and psychiatrists wherever it is available, but meanwhile will try gently and kindly to wean the student away from this overdevotion.

Identifying Personal Teaching Strengths and Weaknesses

Although it is true that teachers must accept some definite limits in their relationships with students, the picture need not be too bleak. After all, good teachers work in a satisfying atmosphere of mutual respect. This means that the beginning teacher assesses his qualifications for teaching to discover where his strengths lie. As a rough guide to this appraisal, we will sketch three major teacher “types.” Probably no beginning teacher is a pure type, but he may be closer to one than to either of the others.

Type A. This type might be called the *academic teacher*. He is primarily interested in subject matter. He would have liked to continue study in his own field. Meanwhile, he tries to keep up with new developments in it. He is often a brilliant teacher of his subject. He is very sensitive about maintaining high standards of workmanship and scholarship; his criteria are usually of college-preparatory level. He does his best job with college-bound students, since they are more likely to do well in his subject and to find it interesting. He does not do much counseling with his students; often knows very little about their home background; is impatient with psychological explanations of poor student work, which he is prone to term “excuses.”

Type B. This type might be called the *counselor-teacher*. He is

first of all interested in students. He uses subject matter mainly as a way of working with young people. Sometimes his teaching is a little dull in the classroom because he didn't spend enough time preparing for it. Most of his attention is devoted to students and their problems, and only incidentally to the chores of teaching. He gives grades almost intuitively, because of the effect on the student rather than for any measurable attainment. He is likely to drive Type A teachers mad on this account, since they can never understand his different view of the function of grades and standards. Type B teachers are sometimes extroverts who seem happiest when with a group of people. Sometimes they are highly sensitive and easily hurt because of their awareness of people, their emotions and motives.

Type C. This kind of teacher might be called the *inspirational type*. Like Type A, he loves his subject field, but on an emotional level primarily. He is convinced that if people only loved to play music, to paint, to play on the team, then all the ills that troubled them would probably fade away. This is the kind of teacher who will put on marvelous plays and have constant wrangles with the rest of the faculty because he insists that students be released from any and all classes for rehearsals. Obviously, taking part in a dramatic production (or playing on the team, or being in the band, or participating in a debate, or putting out the school newspaper, or decorating the gym for a fiesta) is more valuable to the student's total personality than any class! These teachers are likely to get support from Type B teachers, but Type A teachers resist them to the last breath. A running battle usually goes on all year between this kind of teacher and those who have the students in other academic classes. The inspirational-type teacher usually asks only that students feel the spark, share his enthusiasm for the activity. Then even lack of skill may be forgiven. This teacher may, however, sometimes be impatient with the unskilled and devote most of his time and energy to those who are enthusiastic and talented.⁶

Some teachers have strengths of all three kinds, while others are definitely one type or another. It is not necessarily wrong to be any one type of teacher. We cannot be all things to all students, and

⁶ This discussion is adapted from materials prepared by Dr. Robert N. Bush, School of Education, Stanford University, California. For a more complete analysis, see Robert N. Bush, *The Teacher-Pupil Relationships* (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1954).

we should not feel a sense of personal failure on this account. It is wrong, however, to refuse to recognize the other kinds of strength. We have two major responsibilities: First, to do well that kind of teaching in which we have the greatest talent, whether it is of the academic, counseling, or inspirational type; and, second, to strive to do justice to those students who are not going to respond to our major strength.

As a counseling teacher, for example, we may find students who plainly do not care to have the teacher inquire into their personal lives, students who are academically oriented and happy in this role. With them, the counseling teacher would do well to keep hands off, to be kind and patient, but not offended if such students do not respond well to counseling overtures. Similarly, as an academic teacher, we must make allowances for those students who do not excel in our subject field and make an effort to help them succeed at their level in some facet of the subject that interests them. The gravest mistake we can make in teaching is to assume that students who are not like ourselves are of a lower order of human beings.

The examples of teachers at work presented in the Introduction of this book illustrate how different teachers approach the teaching job: each is good in his own right, each has a value to offer the educational system. If schools were staffed with one kind of teacher only, school would be a deadly place indeed for those students who do not respond to that kind of teacher. A wise administrator tries to achieve balance in his faculty, with all types of teachers well represented, thus making it possible for almost every student to find some teacher who can give him personal support and assistance in effective learning. It must also be remembered that as a member of a school faculty the teacher must work with teachers of all three types and combinations of them.

The kind of school program that is best for students must be a compromise among the various points of view. Although it is often difficult for Type A teachers to understand Types B and C, and vice versa, a recognition of the genuine contribution each type makes to the education of adolescents will help to reduce conflict and provide some workable compromises. The method of working that is right for us is not, *ipso facto*, right for everyone else, though a kind of personal devotion often deludes us into thinking so. We tend also to project onto others those things we know best in our-

selves, and assume that their motives and ways of working are similar to ours. This is far from true. Awareness of the real differences among teachers will aid the beginning teacher in finding his own forte.

Ways of Thinking and Teaching

Another way of looking at differences in teaching emphasis has been aptly presented by Abel,⁷ who has set up some suggestive categories that define different ways of dealing with ideas:

Logical Thinking

Ideas come from factual understanding. Tends to ask questions of fact or causation.

Objective Ideas

Ideas do not produce excitement; remains calm throughout discussions; tends to shy away from ideas that come too close to his ego.

Socialized Modes of Expression

Is concerned about getting his ideas across; will modify his ways of talking if not understood.

Rigid Thinking

Slow to modify or adopt ideas; may develop logic-tight compartments and often fail to see consistency or inconsistency of ideas.

Compulsive Thinking

It is important to finish a task, get the solution to the problem, finish reading the book. Unfinished tasks bother him.

Autistic Thinking

Ideas "come from nowhere." Not overly concerned about the factual or logical basis for an idea.

Subjective Ideas

Interested primarily in topics of close concern to him, uninterested in others. Gets excited and enthusiastic about such ego-involving ideas.

Egocentric Modes of Expression

Assumes he is understood by others; is likely to be careless about pronouns; unaware of gaps in communication between himself and others; surprised when these occur.

Fluid Thinking

Easily modifies ideas in the light of new facts or experiences; is sensitive to inconsistencies; may seem flighty in skipping from idea to idea.

Noncompulsive Thinking

Drops a task if it appears unimportant or a new and more challenging one turns up. Unfinished task does not worry him. Sometimes never finishes anything.

⁷ Theodora M. Abel, "Modes of Thinking and Classroom Adjustment," *Journal of Social Psychology*, 9:287-298, August 1938.

These categories suggest an important idea to the beginning teacher—namely, that his modes of thinking may be far different from those of students. Judgments that fail to recognize these differences may be fallacious. For example, a teacher who himself is eager to try new ways of doing things may be surprised by students who object, who prefer the usual, albeit dull, routines. The teacher probably is more fluid in his thinking, whereas the students may be more rigid. A teacher who complains of a student, "He always wants to know why; he won't take anything on faith!" probably is prone to autistic thinking, whereas the student works by means of a more logical mode of thinking. Where a student may say of a poem, "How exciting!" the teacher may say, "Look at the perfection of meter and the elaborate rhyme scheme." The teacher and the student here might tend to talk around each other. Each might wonder what was wrong with the other. Teachers who suffer from egocentric modes of expression may produce great anxiety in their students because they cannot communicate. These teachers may well find their greatest help in extensive use of student leadership, which can aid them in the job of communication.

Since so much of our teaching is concerned with ideas and ways of arriving at new ideas, it is important for the teacher to be sensitive to his own modes of thinking and try to avoid pushing all students into his own pattern. By aiding students to recognize their modes of thinking and appreciating the contributions each type can make to the solution of problems, the teacher can do much toward building in each student genuine self-respect. Too often the imaginative, creative, intuitive student is lost in the academic shuffle—at great personal cost.

How Do Teachers Feel about Teaching?

To what extent do teachers like being teachers? There is considerable evidence of both a positive and a negative nature. On the one hand, during the Second World War thousands of teachers left teaching voluntarily to enter industrial or other newly created jobs. Many expressed relief at a chance to escape from teaching. On the other hand, teachers give constant testimonial to the stimulation

and reward of teaching and command genuine community respect for their talent, skill, and education. A survey inquiring among employed men about their satisfaction with their job found that while only 1 per cent of the men teachers who were polled stated, "I seldom enjoy teaching," 7.2 per cent of employed men in general said their work was dull or boring.*

In the average university or liberal arts college, the education department and courses are likely to be viewed as academically inferior. Much as this may be resented, and untrue as many of the accusations may be, the fact remains that education majors are often looked down on. In the colleges that are primarily teacher-training institutions, or which include industrial and agricultural programs, this attitude may be less in evidence. But even here undergraduates may be heard saying, "I don't tell my friends that I'm going to get a credential; they'll think I'm crazy," or, "I find myself agreeing with people about the low quality of my education courses even when I know that this isn't really true." Some students cannot withstand the pressure, and, if they remain in education at all, are likely to be cynical about work in professional education.

To be sure, there is an age-old prejudice against teaching. Teachers must share with doctors the world's most celebrated sneers, and with them also the world's unbounded hero-worship. Always and everywhere, "He is a school teacher" has meant "He is an underpaid pitiable drudge." Even a politician stands higher, because power in the street seems less of a mockery than power in the classroom. But when we speak of Socrates, Jesus, Buddha, and "other great teachers of humanity," the atmosphere somehow changes and the politician's power begins to look shrunken and mean. August examples show that no limit can be set to the power of a teacher, but this is equally true in the other direction: no career can so nearly approach zero in its effects.²

Of course, no one enjoys being in a low-status position. In the ranking studies of professions, teaching comes below medicine, law, and engineering, but ahead of nursing and library work. The reason for this is obscure. It may be that the early school teachers in America were often ignorant and ill educated, or it may be that, in the past, the women who went into teaching were often socially

* W. S. Monroe, Jr., ed., *Encyclopedia of Educational Research*, rev. ed. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1950).

² Jacques Barzun, *Teacher in America* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1945), pp. 4-5.

isolated. They were considered prudish and eccentric old maids. Undoubtedly, the low status has been modified by the recent interest in improved professional standards, by the entry of men in greater numbers into high school teaching, by employment of married women teachers, and by greater freedom for the unmarried woman teacher. But the old stereotype is not completely gone: an examination of cartoons and fiction about teachers shows the teacher to be very often a scowling, old-fashioned, prim old maid. Some men entering high school teaching, resenting this stereotype, relieve their feelings in a kind of general deprecation of the whole teaching profession. Such an attitude can hardly produce a satisfied and satisfying teacher. We need to be aware of these common attitudes about teaching, but we do not have to bow to them.

Community Expectations of Teachers

Beginning teachers are often concerned about what a teacher can or cannot do in a given community. There are numerous instances in the literature of several decades ago of teaching contracts specifying how many times a month a teacher could leave the community or prohibiting card playing and dancing. There are still places where close surveillance over teachers' personal lives is maintained. The prevailing trend, however, is toward fewer and fewer community restrictions.

Probably dislocations of the war years have had a marked effect on what communities expect from teachers. One study by Lichliter¹⁰ shows some of the expectations in smaller communities regarding women teachers. Although on the whole few contracts were specific regarding such things as church attendance, teachers often felt bound to participate because of advice from school board members or because of community pressure. However, it was noted that of all the women teachers replying from a sampling of communities of 12,000 or less from all over the nation, 61 per cent said that the community expected *nothing* of them in church or community activities. Only three kinds of social restrictions were sufficiently common to

¹⁰ Mary Lichliter, "Social Obligations and Restrictions Placed on Women Teachers," *School Review*, 54:14-23, January 1946.

cause a heavy proportion of the teachers to mention them—drinking, dating students, and smoking.

No one questions the community objection to dating students. The prohibition against drinking and smoking applies principally to indulgence in public places. It is only fair to observe that smaller communities apply the same restriction on smoking and drinking to all women of the community, not only to women teachers. Restrictions, then, are fewer than usually supposed. The facts do not warrant the feeling that to enter teaching is to become subhuman.

It is heartening, also, to note that the younger generation of teachers, having successfully revolted against many older concepts of adolescent behavior, is less likely to be overly sensitive to community pressures than previous generations. The beginning teacher might well find for himself the middle pathway between completely ignoring community expectations, and completely giving in to the slightest raising of an eyebrow. More self-respect on the part of beginning teachers, more feeling of adult responsibility for their own behavior, will do much to help re-educate communities into the acceptance of teachers as mature adults.

Some school systems make a practice of favoring local residents for new positions. To return to a high school where he was known as a student only four or five years previously may interfere with an individual's complete acceptance as a full-fledged teacher. He may find that other members of the staff still consider him a "kid," and winning his place as a respected member of the school faculty may be that much more difficult. On the other hand, returning to familiar ground means that he does not have the same feelings regarding social restrictions. He knows the community's foibles; he is well aware of the sharp eye and sharper tongue of the town gossip. He knows how to avoid her, and how to handle the inquiries she makes about his personal affairs. To a stranger, this would seem intolerable prying, but what is felt to be a restriction by a newcomer may be so much a part of the town pattern that one raised in the community is unaware of it.

Community pressure, then, is how you see it. The present-day trend is to extend the anonymity of the urban community to more and more portions of our society. What a person does is his own business. Many teachers remark on the apparent lessening of attention to the minutiae of their daily lives. As a profession, teaching

is probably no more confining than most of the professions; it is just that more people are aware of what teachers do. The recent trend of more and more men entering the ranks of teaching on all levels may also have a marked effect on the community expectations of teachers.

The attention the community pays to the teacher bears, of course, an inverse ratio to the size of the community; the smaller the town, the more the people will notice what the teacher does. However, communities have also been criticized by beginning teachers because they ignore the teacher.

This upper-class suburban community seemed, to the new teacher, to be an attractive place in which to teach. But it turned out to be very lonely, too. She could hear the gay laughter from the parties across the street, but no one invited her. Social affairs of all sorts seemed to occupy the energies of the bright young couples she met daily in the streets. But the only invitations she received were from the other teachers. Soon she discovered that her friends would come only from this closed circle. However, after the first feeling of being left out, she soon came to enjoy her colleagues. After several years, when she had entered a few community activities—community theater, a fly-casting club, and so forth—she widened her circle of friendships and met a number of the local residents socially. But it took time.

In all types of communities the beginning teacher will find his first friends on the faculty. It is important, therefore, to learn quickly who they are, to talk with them, to be agreeable and friendly. Some of the problems of the new teacher on the faculty have been discussed in Chapter 22.

In summary, the process of becoming a teacher starts within the individual. Techniques of teaching, knowledge about students and schools, are the outward polish that professional education provides. But to be a teacher means more than that. It means acceptance of the role of the teacher, recognition of the feeling of being a teacher, ability to accept the social expectations of teachers.

Every Son and Daughter

These are not the easiest years in which to begin teaching in the high school. We remind beginning teachers at the end of this

book, as we did at the start, that unprecedented enrollments began swelling the high school population as recently as 1956. Classes will be larger and buildings will be less adequate. The clamor will mount both within the teaching profession and among taxpayers to try to ease this burden by eliminating students through higher scholastic standards or some other screening device.

Beginning teachers may be tempted to join the chorus crying for the return to the tradition of education for the elite. Teaching would be so much easier, colleagues will reason. Public education would be so much cheaper, taxpayers will claim. Probably both sentiments will be cloaked in loftier phrases, but the underlying motivations will remain the same. Yet every honest citizen—whether teacher or taxpayer—must realize, if he will only reflect a moment, that without an informed electorate, democracy will surely perish. So long as every son and daughter has the right to vote, every teacher and taxpayer has a responsibility for their education.

This reasoning applies with equal force to the rising problem of integrating minority groups within the high school. The problem has never been restricted to the South. Large cities in the North as well have in effect maintained at least partial segregation under the guise of attendance boundaries. In this decade considerable progress in integration will certainly be made in all sections of the country. But it is only realistic to warn beginning teachers to prepare themselves for the difficult transition years.¹¹

The teacher who faces for the first time interracial or intercultural groups, or both, would do well to follow the suggestions made by the YWCA on the basis of extensive experience with such groups:

1. The teacher should be keenly aware of group relationships over and above specific interracial problems.
2. The teacher should be familiar with the local school program and what progress has been made in this area.
3. The teacher should know how all people live in his community: housing, employment, community attitudes.
4. The teacher should seek to develop warmth in his relationships with his group; if they disagree with his policies, they can let him know without fear of censure or retaliation.
5. The teacher should seek to get acquainted with the leader of

¹¹ Jean D. Grambs, *Education in a Transition Community* (New York: National Conference of Christians and Jews, 1952).

all segments of the community: know the majority-group leaders as well as the minority-group leaders.

6. The teacher should be an educator in this area—not a propagandist. Public campaigning for “equality” may be the best method of offending those with whom he must work.

7. The teacher should understand how the members of minority groups think and feel besides seeing into the roots of majority prejudice; by genuine seeking for information from minority leaders, the teacher can often gain valuable insights.

8. The teacher should talk over mistakes with someone who can help him analyze what he has said or done: if minority-group students do not seem to respond to the program as set up, an outsider may see what is wrong.

9. The teacher should not deal with members of minority groups in a special manner.

10. The teacher should avoid saying, “Oh *you* are all right,” to an individual of another group, as though implying that they are different from or better than others of their group.¹²

Meeting human-relations problems takes more than just following democratic classroom procedures mechanically. Human relations need the sanction of the teacher’s feelings. This emotional acceptance is much more difficult to obtain than mere intellectual assent. One of the problems, then, of becoming a teacher is recognizing this new demand for dealing freely and equally with all kinds of children from diverse origins and backgrounds, and overcoming in ourselves our own cultural provincialism or prejudice.

Getting the Job

In the decade ahead, secondary teaching positions will be plentiful the country over. But this does not mean that a particular community will always have job openings in every teaching field. In general, a large range of opportunities will be available in the big cities and the smaller towns. The suburban communities will tend

¹² Dorothy I. Height, *Step by Step with Interracial Groups* (New York: YWCA, Woman’s Press, 1948).

to have somewhat fewer vacancies, with more applicants per vacancy.

When the beginning teacher does wish to be considered by a school system with many applicants, he will be at an advantage if he has a number of hobbies and skills that enable him to fit into several parts of the school program. For example, a teacher with a social studies major and an English minor may find the competition intense; but he will enhance his possibilities of employment if he can also coach dramatics, or has made an extensive hobby of photography, or has experience as a journalist. The same holds true of a woman prepared to teach languages who is a fine musician as well, who may have had experience as a librarian, or who has a hobby of nature study. Likewise, teachers with wide travel and work experiences are likely to be favored over those who have stayed in the cloister and know their way only around the home town and the library stacks. The added maturity and independence that come from work experience and travel are almost always significant to an administrator.

Placement Agencies

In seeking a job, the beginner should make use of local placement facilities. Such facilities are maintained by most colleges and universities for the benefit of their own graduates. The placement function of the teachers college is so important that many institutions require students to register at the placement office before they may be certified for a credential. Others set up a special office for the placement of teachers only and offer another facility for other graduates. Only nominal registration fees are charged. Such offices will gather confidential letters of recommendation, make contacts with administrators in the field, and help students with placement advice. It is suggested that where such facilities are available, the student inquire regarding placement trends early in his educational career. Often a more advantageous course preparation is possible if the student is told early enough that in a given locality, a journalism minor might be better than straight English, or corrective speech preparation better than general speech training. Placement offices usually have on file the latest statistics on occupational trends. Advice and guidance are also available regarding the best localities

for job opportunities, proper procedure in job applications, and best interview practice.

What about private placement agencies? Sometimes special placement problems make it necessary for the individual to utilize the services of private teacher placement agencies. Some college placement offices will furnish such agencies with the information gathered by the college, others will not. The private agency charges anywhere from 5 per cent to 10 per cent of the first year's salary, which may be a heavy financial drain on the individual. Although most agencies are highly reputable and ethical in their practices, some are not. The student would be well advised to consult his own placement office or a member of his faculty about the merit of private agencies before using their services. Some states have placement offices operated by the teachers' association. These generally charge a small percentage of salary and are highly reputable.

Some students may wish to canvass the field independently. This is sometimes profitable; on the other hand, it is costly in time and energy. A consultation with the college placement office and with the faculty known to the student is a useful preliminary procedure. Letters sent ahead to the individuals to be consulted are always helpful.

Job Interviews and Applications

In obtaining a teaching job, the job interview is so important that beginning teachers should make every effort to gain skill and poise in the interview situation. Appropriate dress, general appearance, ability to talk with an administrator on a professional level, evidence of maturity and poise—all of these are important. Administrators are concerned with the success the student has had in student teaching and related teaching experiences, such as playground work, work with boys' and girls' clubs and groups, Sunday school teaching. They are also interested in the personableness of the future teacher. Specific inquiries will be made about competence in a teaching field.

Students may have occasion to write letters of application for a job. These should be simple, formal, and direct; but it is only too easy to make gross mistakes. It is wise never to send such a letter until it has been read by another person with experience in writing

applications. Included with a letter of this sort should be a brief sketch of experience and education, and a list of individuals for reference. Any letter of recommendation sent by the applicant will be suspect; obviously no one is going to be frank if he knows the subject of the letter will see it. Thus, the confidential letter of recommendation is much more valuable.

In choosing individuals to act as references, the student should carefully select those who know him in a professional relationship. The home-town banker may attest to the student's personal character and this, of course, has its place, but the administrator is much more interested in professional character. Students sometimes make the mistake of asking faculty members to act as references when they have had only slight acquaintance with them or when faculty members have been very favorably impressed. A few favorable references are far better than many lukewarm ones. Students should particularly seek out those who have observed them in action with young people or in leadership roles in adult groups. The qualities demonstrated in these situations impress administrators as having a direct carry-over to high school teaching.

Accepting the Job

The ethics of job commitment are important. Teachers should not accept a job as insurance until a better offer comes along. They will quickly lose the backing of any placement office if it is found that they have been "playing the field." A statement of acceptance is binding, and only the gravest of personal situations permits the teacher to ask to be released from a contract. Even if a better job is offered, with higher pay and other inducements, in the long run it is wiser to abide by the original contract. Such breaches of faith quickly become known among administrators, and will do the individual no good. The new teacher is often so flattered by the first offer of a job that he jumps at it. But it is probable that if there is one offer early in the placement season, then others will come. The beginning teacher should think several times before accepting the first offer, unless it is very close to what he has wanted.

Partly for these reasons, the student would do well to plan his student teaching in advance of entering the job market. Many of the

best positions will be filled early; the administrator is more likely to take one who has already proved his ability in student teaching than one who is a "dark horse" and merely has good academic or personal recommendations.

Sometimes the high school will select one or more of its replacements from the student teachers who have been placed there. The alert student will see his student teaching as a possible avenue to placement. He will attempt to act more like a professional teacher than a college student and will try to understand the workings of the high school in a serious and interested fashion. He will see to it that the administrator knows that he is around. The principal will not welcome a daily diary from a student teacher, but he will be favorably impressed by one or more professional interviews that seek to gain advice and information about teaching in general and the problems of this school in particular.

The Teacher on the Job

Although this book is designed primarily as a working guide for students prior to entering teaching, it may be well to discuss some of the ways to make on-the-job teaching more satisfying.

In the school systems of America there is growing emphasis on in-service education. Alert leaders in education recognize the importance of helping the teacher to help himself. However, this is not enough. The individual teacher who seeks to grow in service, to continue to derive personal satisfaction from his job, has several possibilities for continuing his own professional education. First, he can join the professional organizations in his field of special interest; second, he can join professional organizations of a general nature; and third, he can utilize vacation periods to gain further education in professional or academic areas.

Today the teacher in the high school has available several national organizations in each subject field, many of which have local units that meet monthly or quarterly to exchange professional ideas. Such association is invaluable to the teacher. Probably the best investment the beginning teacher can make is subscribing to the journal that is devoted to the teaching problems of his special field.

He will also want to read one or more general education journals. This monthly reminder of the new thinking and research in his special area and in the broader fields of education keeps the teacher alive in his work. He will find many suggestions that have immediate carry-over to his daily tasks in the classroom. The stimulation of reading about what others are doing will go a long way toward making teaching creative and satisfying.

The teacher is not a finished product when he completes his formal college requirements. Only a part of the educational job has been done. The rest has to be done on the job. It is foolish to assume that we can or should learn no more. Teaching has too many responsibilities to permit us to brush off lightly the demands to maintain a high level of competence.

The summer vacation has always been important to continued professional growth. Some systems insist that each teacher, during a certain number of years, accumulate a minimum of college credit. This forces the teacher to go back to school whether he wishes to or not. Often teachers object to this procedure; its values are, however, unquestioned if the teacher makes a wise choice of college work. The beginning teacher, in particular, will find great need for special course work during the first few years of teaching to meet some of the obvious gaps in his preparation. Many teachers, for example, recognize the problem of remedial reading in their classes only after having taught. A summer session in a reading workshop may be invaluable.

POSTSCRIPT

When we had finished writing this chapter, we realized that we had not touched it up with the usual bright promises to beginning teachers. We had said little about job security, salary schedules with regular increments, long vacations. We hadn't said much about these because they are not the significant considerations. The significant considerations reside in the nature of the work itself, and not in its appurtenances, pleasurable or no. This is work of basic importance to human welfare. No modern society can long survive without trained people devoted to the work of education.

Because we feel so strongly about the importance of good edu-

cation to people, we have been unwilling to gloss over the hard facts. It may seem that pessimism has permeated these pages. It is not pessimism—but realism. Today, teachers need more than cheery expectations of a bright future. They need to have thorough scholarly preparation. They need to have practical training in the everyday tactics of the classroom. Even more, they need to know that, however skilled they may be as scholars and tacticians, there will be obstacles, problems, and anxieties. It would be convenient for teachers if we could somehow line the walls of the classroom with lead and shield the students from the radiations of the larger world. It would be convenient for teachers and disastrous for students.

But we cannot shut out any of society's inconsistency, indecision, or conflict. They are all there with us, every day, as we teach. We are better off knowing that they will be our constant companions than deluding ourselves with rosy illusions. We will know then from the beginning that society's unwillingness to carry out consistently the principles it says it believes in will plague us when we try to practice those principles in the classroom. Students will rebel. Parents will complain. The words are all right, they will say in effect, but we don't live that way. And we will be discouraged and disheartened. We should expect to be—many times. But this gives us no license to turn away from the long task of good education—to say we know that's all right in theory, but it won't work. It will work if enough of us keep working at it, keep clearly in view what the obstacles are, keep alive and growing our training for the job ahead. And this is the only bright promise we make you—that the job is tough and long. But no job is more important.

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Appendix

Suggested Activities

Chapter 1: *You and the High School*

1. Recall your own high school teachers. Select the best and the worst. First compose a list of the qualities that earned each the title. Then think of at least one illustrative anecdote to make each quality graphic.
2. Make the best answer you can at this time to these questions posed in the chapter:
 - At best, what is this vocation?
 - Is this a vocation in which I can perform effectively?
 - What are the difficulties I am likely to encounter?
 - Will I be able to cope with such difficulties?
 - What satisfactions and rewards will I find in this career?
 - How can I learn to achieve them?
3. Look again at the list composed by beginning teachers about hard spots in the teacher's job on pages 15 and 16. What would you add or subtract? Then make your comments about how you think you can best get yourself ready for the task.
4. Make an analysis of the experienced teachers' complaints as listed on page 16. Then reply to these questions from the chapter:
 - To what extent do you feel that these difficulties are real? What are the facts, as best you can obtain them, about classroom conditions today and tomorrow? About buildings and other facilities? About the behavior of adolescents? About salaries? About the high school teacher's place in the community?

5. Review the statements about satisfactions in teaching made by some future teachers on page 17.
What do you expect to be the deepest satisfactions in teaching?
6. Read from such divergent writers as Jacques Barzun, Earl Kelley, Robert Hutchins, Harold Taylor, Bernard Iddings Bell, Marie Rasey, Robert J. Havighurst, Margaret Mead, and Arthur Bestor. Prepare a symposium on teaching out of quotations from their writings.
7. The chapter quotes Riesman's opinion that teachers should not feel required to be "omnicompetent." To what extent do you agree? What limitations would you place on the teacher's role?
8. Evaluate your own education for teaching. What does it presently lack to strike a balance among "know what," "know why," and "know how"? What will you do about it?
9. What are your predictions about the ways in which high schools will change during your teaching career? What bases do you have for your prophecies?

Chapter 2: Student Teaching

1. Visit the school where you will teach. Describe the facilities: the library, the art and music rooms, the science, shop, and other rooms specially equipped for instruction. Describe some typical general classrooms. Draw some conclusions about the kinds of teaching and learning that develop from these surroundings.
2. With the help of your resident teacher and your college supervisor construct a guide for observing. Or use the criteria suggested in Lucien B. Kinney, *Measurement of a Good Teacher* (San Francisco: California Teachers Association, 1952). Make systematic observations. Try to draw some conclusions about how you will use what you have observed when you begin your student teaching.
3. Make a careful time budget for the period when you will do your student teaching. Try to calculate realistically time for preparation, time to review your own teaching each day, time to review the work of your students, time for your other courses, if you carry other work while student teaching. Report candidly what you have eliminated or curtailed of your normal activities.
4. Make a written statement to be given to your resident teacher and/or your college supervisor about your understanding of the way in which he/they will judge your competence. Discuss the statement with him/them.
5. Complete a list of school and community resources available to you

during student teaching. Estimate where you will use these resources and how you will obtain them.

6. Appraise your strengths and weaknesses as a teacher. Try to make concrete what steps you can take to further your strengths and reduce your weaknesses. Discuss your statements with your resident teacher and/or your college supervisor.

Chapter 3: *The Adolescent in the High School*

1. Administer a questionnaire to determine the differences in a class of high school students. Here are some illustrative items. You will want to add others.

Background:

Father's occupation; education; place of birth

Mother's occupation; education; place of birth

Your place of birth

Other places you have lived

Your hobbies

Part time jobs

Things you like best about school

Things you like least about school

What would you like to be doing ten years from now?

What groups in and out of school do you belong to?

Analyze the differences you find. What implications could these differences have for you if you were teaching this class?

2. Examine the cumulative records in a local high school. Look for the following items for a single high school class:

Physical records: type, items entered

Family background data: socio-economic level, number of brothers and sisters, etc.

Scholastic records: strengths and weaknesses

Anecdotal material from teachers: characteristic behavioral patterns

Counselors' reports: indications of personal relationships with peers

Standardized test reports: dates and consistency of scores

Vocational goals: college or terminal

What help do the records provide to the classroom teacher?

Give specific examples. What further information would be useful?

3. Administer a standardized achievement, aptitude, or intelligence test to a high school class. Score and interpret findings.
4. Review and compare ten intelligence or aptitude tests reported in the most recent *Mental Measurements Yearbook*. (O. K. Buros,

editor. Published by The Gryphon Press, Highland Park, N. J.)

Discuss:

How was the test validated?

How easy or difficult is it to administer and score?

Is it useful for group or individual predictions? How can you tell?

What possible interpretative hazards might be present?

5. Write a description of your most successful high school friend. Also of the one you thought was least successful. How do you account for the differences? What could the high school have done for the one who was the least successful?
6. Consider the principal developmental needs and tasks of adolescents:
 - Coming to terms with a changing physique;
 - Gaining independence from adults;
 - Finding a place among age-mates;
 - Establishing heterosexual relationships;
 - Selecting a vocation.

To what extent should these needs and tasks affect your teaching? Should they affect choice of content, materials, methods, evaluation?

Chapter 4: The Curriculum of the High School

1. Obtain the class schedule of a high school. Analyze it and compare with the recommendations of the Harvard Report and the Educational Policies Commission Report, *Education for All American Youth*. What changes would you like to see in the course offerings? What other changes?
2. Collect the arguments pro and con on one of the proposals for curricular revision discussed in this chapter. Analyze them for validity and feasibility. What obstacles would need to be overcome in your local high school in order to implement this kind of curricular revision?
3. Interview three to five teachers regarding their attitudes towards a core curriculum. Prepare for this interview by finding a model core program from the available literature that seems to you to be most feasible for a local high school or community school.
4. Interview ten or more recent graduates of the local high school. Ask the following questions or comparable ones:
 - What jobs have you had since leaving high school?
 - What are you doing now?
 - Are you satisfied with the way you are doing your present job?
 - What in your high school career prepared you best for what you are now doing or expect to be doing?

What aspect of the high school program could have been strengthened to help you to do a better job today?

In what ways would you like to see the high school change for the coming generation?

5. Examine model courses of study or examples of such courses of study in your teaching field as found in the professional literature. List the educational objectives for your subject area. Take this list and visit at least three classrooms in which this subject is being taught. Identify the specific content and methods which are designed to achieve the stated objectives. Evaluate the success to which the classroom experiences seem to be meeting these objectives.
6. Make a study of "action research." Consult periodical and other sources. Propose some "action research" for curricular revision.
7. Review general current criticisms or the writings of some one critic (for example, Arthur Bestor, *The Restoration of Learning*, Knopf, 1955) with regard to high school instruction. Summarize the charges and evaluate the pertinent evidence.

Chapter 5: Developing Democratic Behavior in the Classroom

1. Take the suggested check list for the democratic classroom and use it in making observations of an elementary and a secondary class. Compare the findings. Which classroom seems to be most democratic? How do you account for the differences?
2. Attend a faculty meeting. What kind of leadership do you observe? To what extent are the relationships democratic? What are the limitations on school democracy?
3. Observe a leader of some youth group activity (Scouts, YM or YWCA, Sunday School, Campfire, etc.) and compare with classroom teachers of the same age groups. Which situation seems most democratic? Why? What variations in student behavior do you observe in the different situations?
4. Review the classroom situations you have actually been in. Which of the democratic behaviors listed in this chapter were most frequently ignored? Which were observed most often? Arrange the skills demanded of a teacher in fostering democratic behavior in an order from least difficult to most difficult. What does this imply for you in your teaching?
5. In recalling the history of your own learning, which teacher did you like best? What did this teacher do for you? For others in the class-

room? How did this teacher's classroom compare with the democratic classroom described in this chapter?

6. List the democratic classroom behaviors as given in this chapter in terms of your own feeling as to which ones you could do first, which second, and so forth in your own classroom, in striving to make it more democratic.
7. Review David Riesman's writings or William H. Whyte, Jr., *The Organization Man* (Doubleday, 1957). Then consider the question: Does the democratic classroom foster significant individuality?

Chapter 6: How to Plan for Teaching and Learning

1. Prepare a resource unit, including the following:

Purposes,
Problems,
Activities,
Materials,
Evaluation.

2. Select a chapter from a textbook commonly used in your subject field. Expand the material covered into a resource unit as given above. Collect as many as possible of the actual materials you would use.
3. Observe a classroom. Record all motivational techniques used by the teacher and the reaction of students to them. Analyze the motivational pattern observed. Will this produce positive outcomes or will the outcomes be negative?
4. Prepare a lesson plan. Indicate every point where student-teacher planning might occur. Show what possible alternatives would need to be foreseen by the teacher.
5. Select several lesson plans. Give the specific assignments that would be necessary, following the assignment pattern given on pages 148-152. Indicate what material would be needed to make the assignment pattern function.
6. Observe a classroom. As your observation proceeds, sketch out what you believe to be the plan for the lesson. When the lesson is over, interview the teacher regarding his plan for the period. Identify the discrepancies between his lesson plan and your sketch and account for them.
7. Prepare several assignments in your own subject area as usually taught. Present them, orally or in writing, to fellow classmates. Ask them to react to them in terms of:

Highly interesting and important; I would like to go to work on this.

Not very interesting or important; sounds dull.

Not at all interesting or important; sounds like much work for what will be learned.

Chapter 7: *Providing Materials for Learning*

1. Prepare some one of the following instructional materials designed to motivate students in attacking a problem: a poster, bulletin board display, slide sequence, strip film, exhibit, etc.
2. Evaluate some commercially produced instructional materials: films, film strips, recording, free materials, slides, exhibits.
3. Examine and evaluate the teaching aids provided by *Scholastic* (Teacher's edition), *Time*, *Reader's Digest*, *Newsweek*.
4. Prepare an extensive and organized picture-and-article file taken from current magazines, for use in your major teaching field.
5. Select radio and television broadcasts that should be called to the attention of students for subject matter enrichment.
6. Survey a number of classrooms with regard to the kinds and usefulness of various free and inexpensive materials. Ask teachers concerned which materials are most helpful to them. What are their objections to materials recommended but not utilized?
7. Examine the professional magazines in your teaching field. Collect a bibliography of teaching materials reviewed and listed over a period of not less than three months, preferably for the preceding year.
8. Visit the nearest county, university or city Instructional Materials Center. Report on materials and services available to you if you were teaching in this area. Evaluate the extent of utilization of the Center by interviewing the director or the assistant.

Chapter 8: *Using Community Resources*

1. Select an area of content in your subject field. Canvass the local community for all resources that might be used. Use a resource file card as given in this chapter or devise one for yourself.
2. Find a community resource suitable for a field trip. Outline in complete detail everything that you would do to prepare for, conduct,

- and follow-up the trip. Include classroom discussion topics and evaluation tools.
3. Interview several possible resource visitors. Evaluate each such interview in terms of the classroom preparation necessary to make optimum use of this person. What possible difficulties do you foresee? Outline in detail one classroom presentation of a resource visitor, including preparation, presentation, and follow-up.
 4. On the basis of the community survey guides listed in the bibliography or others available in your library, compile a minimum master list of questions suitable for a survey conducted by high school students. Relate this proposed survey to a specific content area in your subject field. Show briefly how such a survey might be carried out in your class in relation to the content covered.
 5. Prepare a sample questionnaire in some area of special interest to you (student opinion, general public opinion, etc.) and go through the complete cycle of pretesting, final administration, tabulating, and analysis of results. Review this experience critically in light of what you might do differently next time.
 6. Interview the principal or vice-principal of a local high school regarding service projects currently under way or contemplated. Also inquire about the school's record in regard to community service. Recommend further projects to tie in with the content area of your special interest.

Chapter 9: Discussion, Role Playing, and Related Techniques

1. Using the discussion pattern charts given in this chapter, analyze several class discussions in either a college or high school classroom. Compare the different kinds of charting patterns in the different classrooms. How do you account for differences in the observed patterns?
2. Apply the criteria for good discussion questions to a discussion you have listened to in a classroom. How would you modify the discussion to comply better with the criteria given?
3. Make a list of possible discussion questions in your subject field. Give the questions to friends not majoring in your field. Which questions do they rate first? Why? Present the same list to a group of adolescents. Which questions would they like to discuss? Why?
4. Make an exhaustive list of all controversial areas and issues in your subject field. Which are essential in the education of adolescents? Which can more profitably be left for adult consideration? Why?

- Plan in detail the strategy you would employ for presenting to a high school class one controversial issue noted above.
5. Select five possible issues that might lend themselves to role playing in your subject area. Describe briefly the characters and the starting situation, plus any other details such as the desired outcome. If possible, try one such situation in your college class or in a high school class. Evaluate the results. Were the directions clear? Did the individuals chosen to play the parts do a good or poor job? Did the situation develop as you had expected? What was the reaction of the audience? What would you do differently next time in setting up the same role-playing situation?
 6. Set up some role-playing situations relating to problems you expect to face in student teaching or are facing now in a teaching situation: The student who refuses to do an assignment; the other teacher who criticizes your idea; the parent who comes to complain about how much work you are giving the class, etc. Try these in class with several different students giving their solutions to the problem. What different versions were given? How did the role-playing give you new insight into the problem you faced?
 7. Sooner or later every teacher must sponsor class plays, preside at school assemblies, or assist in putting on radio or television shows. To gain skill in rapid skit writing, use the role-playing technique described in this chapter to write a skit for your college classmates, revolving around teacher preparation, going out to get a job, your first day as a student teacher, etc.

Chapter 10: Group Techniques in the Classroom

1. Select a content area which you will be teaching. Outline a lesson plan covering several days or weeks in which you will use either short- or long-term groups. Give the specific instructions that you will furnish the class in setting up the groups.
2. Using one of the group analysis forms given in this chapter, or to be found in the literature. (See Bales, Robert F., *Interaction Process Analysis*, Addison Wesley Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1950; Meil, Alice, "A Group Studies Itself to Improve Itself," *Teachers College Record*, 49:31-44, Oct., 1947; Bernstein, Saul, *Charting Group Progress*, Association Press, New York, 1949.) Analyze the record you obtain in terms of the suggestions made in this chapter.
3. Observe either a formal or informal group. Write a brief anecdotal record of what the group was doing. Identify the group roles that you observed and give specific behaviors that support your analysis.

4. Write a brief description of your own behavior in a recent group situation. What role did you take? How did you feel about the other members of the group? What might you have done differently in order to help the group move forward? With what kinds of individuals in the group did you find it easiest to work? Which were the most difficult? Why?
5. In your own college class, or in a class of high school students, plan for and try out several different kinds of group situations. Evaluate the method. Some suggested situations are: Buzz groups to make suggestions for a class project; a group reading exercise; a group test in which all members cooperate in giving one answer; test questions made up by groups; group role-playing presentations to illustrate a current topic; buzz groups on a highly controversial issue.

Chapter 11: Toward More Permanent Learning

1. Select those items in your subject area which probably need drill procedures to be learned. Defend the importance of these items in terms of psychological and sociological rationales.
2. In addition to the games suggested in this chapter, list further methods that can be used to provide necessary drill situations.
3. Make a study-habit inventory covering such items as: Amount of study required in different courses; number of hours the student usually studies; kinds of study problems he finds most difficult; time of day and place where he studies most, etc. Administer this schedule to ten or more adolescents, either as an interview or a paper-and-pencil response situation. What study-habits training seems indicated by the results of this questionnaire?
4. Interview two or three teachers, parents and students, regarding the question: Is homework valuable? Compare the answers of the three groups. What seems to be the major value and function of the homework? What kinds of homework seem to be preferred by the three groups? What homework procedure do you believe should be followed?
5. Analyze your own study habits. Compare them to the way in which you studied in high school. What changes have occurred? What do you find to be your most difficult problem when you are studying? Compare your study habits with those of several friends taking the same courses. What common problems do you find? How, as a teacher, would you set about to help students overcome these problems?

Chapter 12: Managing the Classroom for Effective Learning

1. Observe several teachers. Note all classroom routines that recur in each classroom every day. How does the teacher provide for those routines? Do the routine events interrupt classroom learning? What use is made of student help in taking care of routines? What suggestions would you have for better management of routine situations?
2. Interview several teachers regarding their clerical duties. What methods have they evolved for handling these duties?
3. Plot several model room arrangements. Describe the merits of your suggested arrangement in terms of better organization of materials, supplies, and total environment, all of which would promote learning.
4. Arrange to visit some of the newest elementary or high school classrooms in your area. Note all improvements that are in line with the best practice and that make possible a flexible laboratory situation for learning. To what extent have these newer classrooms not included desirable items?
5. Review several issues of a number of professional journals, for example, *School Executive*, *Nation's Schools*, *American School Board Journal*. Look for articles and advertising on room equipment and school arrangement. Summarize the data that refer to modern high school classrooms.
6. Often teachers are faced with the difficult problem of making over an old classroom to coincide with modern ideas of learning, without spending any money. A group of students can adopt a classroom, with the consent of the teacher and principal involved, and see how much can be done to improve it. Often high school students, parents and other interested individuals will be glad to help. A renovated classroom, complete with estimated and actual budget, would be a worthwhile semester project.

Chapter 13: Slow and Fast Learners

1. Select a unit of study in your teaching field. Prepare a list of instructional materials that will provide for a wide range of abilities.
2. Keep a list of the assignments, both in and out of class, given by a teacher for a week. If the class is a heterogeneous group, what provisions have been made for slow and fast learners? If it is a homogeneous group, how well calculated are the assignments for the group?

3. Interview a very bright and a very slow student as identified by either a teacher or a counselor. Compare their attitudes toward: school, the future, their families, teachers, social activities, the world of work, college current events. What common attitudes do you find? What are the major differences? Can these be attributed primarily to differences in intelligence?
4. Read and review four or more articles on each side of the issue of homogeneous grouping. What are the arguments for such grouping? What are the arguments against it? Draw your own conclusion about which is the better practice and defend it.
5. Interview a teacher or teachers who have been primarily responsible for slow groups. What particular problems or difficulties have they met? What methods do they use? In general do they favor grouping or oppose it? Interview teachers who instruct mainly fast groups asking the same questions. What conclusions regarding grouping can you draw?
6. Review some proposals for better education for gifted students. What is your evaluation? How will this judgment affect your teaching?

Chapter 14: *The Communication Skills*

1. Using a description of reading problems in your content field, outline a course of action you would undertake in your own classroom in order to meet these problems.
2. Analyze three textbooks used in your content field. Apply one of the readability formulas (the Lorge and Dale-Chall formulas are reprinted with directions for use in C. W. Hunnicutt and William J. Iverson, *Research in the Three R's*, Harper and Brothers, 1958) or make informal appraisals of readability. Which text do you consider most readable? Then try sections of comparable content from all three texts in a high school class. Prepare a comprehension test. How successful was your readability analysis?
3. Select at least two units of instruction taught in your subject field. Make a list of reading materials at different levels of reading difficulty for each area. Try to achieve a wide range of difficulty.
4. Make a reading test in your own content area. If possible, administer it to a group of high school or college students. What do you find of significance regarding reading abilities and reading problems.
5. List and review at least five reading tests covered in the current issue of *Mental Measurements Yearbook*.
6. Give a standard reading test to a high school group. Score and analyze the results. Compare reading-test scores with other data

obtainable on the students such as IQ, school grades, socioeconomic status.

7. Make a time study of several high school classrooms. What proportion of the time is spent in listening? What problems in attention and retention do you observe in the classes with the highest amount of listening, as against those with the lowest?
8. What are the differences in the listening problems in two content areas? List and analyze. What kinds of classroom procedures would you recommend to teachers in these two areas to meet the listening needs of the students?
9. Arrange for a recording of your own speaking voice. What improvements are needed?
10. Have several of your colleagues rate you on a typical teaching presentation. Analyze their findings in terms of your strengths and weaknesses in speech.

Chapters 15 and 16: *Discipline*

1. Collect several anecdotes of discipline situations in the high school classrooms you are observing. In which category, as given in these two chapters, do these situations belong?
2. Analyze some discipline situations in terms of teacher-student interaction. What did the teacher do? What did the student do? What should the teacher have done differently?
3. Evaluate the way in which a teacher handles a discipline situation in terms of "did it work?" and "for whom did it work?"
4. Recall your own educational history. What kinds of discipline situations were you involved in? What did the teacher do? How did you feel about it? What were the long-term effects of these discipline situations?
5. Interview a high school student who has been involved in some discipline situations. Attempt to learn what the student believes to be the problem. (Do not try to enforce any discipline yourself; seek to obtain the *student's* view.) What action would you suggest for future classroom handling of this student on the basis of the information obtained?
6. Review the kinds of discipline situations given in these two chapters. Which do you feel you would have greatest trouble handling? Why? What can you do to prepare yourself to handle them?
7. Describe a typical discipline situation. If this behavior occurred any place but in school, what would be the reaction: in the home? In an office? In a youth group? What kinds of behavior cause trouble

in all such situations? What kinds are problems only in school? What are the implications of this analysis?

8. Interview several teachers about student behavior. Which student behaviors are most difficult to handle, which occur most frequently, which annoy them most? Ask for advice on how to administer discipline in the classroom. Compare these findings with the point of view discussed in these chapters.

Chapter 17: Testing Instruments

1. Make sample test items in one content area for each of the following types:

True-false,
Completion,
Multiple-choice,
Matching,
Essay.

Which kind of questioning do you prefer? What different kinds of knowledge do the different questions seek?

2. Following one of the patterns suggested in the section entitled "Some Departures from Traditional Tests," write at least one complete test in your content area.
3. List and review at least ten standardized tests in your content area as given in the current *Mental Measurements Yearbook*.
4. Give a standardized test in your own content area to a high school class. What do the results indicate? What recommendations would you make on the basis of these results? What dangers do you see in the use of such tests to serve as goals for instruction?
5. Compose a complete test covering a unit of instruction. Administer this test to a high school class. Score and interpret the results. Return the test to the class and discuss the results with them. Describe your whole procedure critically. What would you do differently next time?

Chapter 18: Grading and Reporting Student Progress

1. Collect sample report cards from as many elementary and secondary school districts as are immediately available. What are the outstanding features of these cards? How do they differ by grade level? What changes would you suggest on the high school level?

2. Interview several teachers regarding their philosophy of grading. Describe your own point of view.
3. Interview ten high school students of varying ability and representing different years in school regarding their attitudes towards grading. Which teacher's method do they prefer in this respect? What major complaints do they have? How do those who are succeeding best view grading as compared with students who are failing?
4. Analyze the school records of ten boys and ten girls chosen at random. Are there any trends evident to support the research cited in the chapter regarding the over-grading of girls? Obtain the names of those in the honor society. Which sex is predominant?
5. Obtain the achievement record of several students. Write a model letter for each student in which you inform his parents regarding his progress. Outline a possible interview with one parent covering the things you would say in discussing the progress of his child. (The parent interview could be presented as a role-playing situation to your college class. Have the class evaluate it in terms of parent response and of the realism of the problem.)

Chapter 19: *Techniques of Individual Counseling*

1. Make two case studies, one of a normal student and the other of a student who is having difficulties of some sort in school. Obtain all the information you can from school records, teacher interviews, student interviews. If possible, make a home visit. Does further investigation show the normal student to have significant personal problems? How would you interpret the material on the student having difficulties?
2. Arrange to make a recording of one or more student interviews. Try to be nondirective. Use as a subject "How do you like high school?" Analyze the transcription to find out to what extent you were actually able to achieve a nondirective situation. (See Rogers, Carl, *Counseling and Psychotherapy*, Houghton, Mifflin, 1942, for an example of how to analyze a transcription.)
3. List all the resources available in your community for the guidance of students—other than school guidance services. Interview the director or professional worker in each such agency. Obtain information as to what service is available, who may use it, and what are the referral channels. (If in a large city, obtain the names of at least five such agencies and arrange interviews.)
4. Arrange for at least an hour's interview with one of the school counselors in your area. Make inquiries regarding testing programs, in-

service program for teachers, counselor case-load, types of cases typically handled, the guidance philosophy held by the school personnel, problems encountered in the guidance program.

5. Observe several classrooms. What guidance did the teacher exert? What guidance opportunities existed that the teacher did not fully exploit?

Chapter 20: *Techniques of Group Guidance*

1. Arrange to observe and interview a homeroom or an orientation course teacher. What group guidance is done? How is it handled? What topics are covered? How successful does the program seem to be?
2. List some role playing situations that could be used for group-guidance purposes. If possible try these in either a high-school or a college class. Describe what occurred and evaluate the success of the technique for both participants and observers.
3. Administer one of the diagnostic devices described in this chapter: the three wishes, open questions, autobiography outline. What guidance needs become apparent on an analysis of the material obtained? Outline a possible group-guidance project in your subject field to meet the most crucial guidance needs revealed.
4. Administer a sociometric test, with the cooperation of the classroom teacher, to a high school class. Prior to giving the test, list the students according to what you, or the teacher, think their order of popularity will be and who will choose whom in the test situation. Compare your list with the results of the test. What discrepancies do you note? How do you account for them? What new insights did you gain from the sociometric pattern?
5. Make and administer a "Guess Who" test. Analyze it in the same fashion as suggested for the sociometric test in item 4 above.

Chapter 21: *Other Guidance Activities*

1. Arrange to interview three high school students regarding their academic and vocational plans. Discuss their school program with them in light of their objectives. Analyze this experience in terms of vocational and academic guidance needs of youth.
2. Interview the school counselor about the kinds of academic guidance

- he provides in individual conferences. Ask also about the information available in the guidance office. Seek his advice on the kind of assistance classroom teachers can give in academic guidance.
3. Interview the personnel in the local branch of your State Employment Office about vocational opportunities for youth. Also interview personnel directors of industries in the area and officials of private employment agencies.
 4. Interview a random group of five business men in the community who employ high school graduates. Secure their reactions to the training provided by the high school, further programs that might be useful and the general employability of high school graduates.
 5. If the school conducts any work-experience programs, interview the director of the program, several students who are participating, and several of their employers. How well is this program working? What contributions does it make to the usual high school curriculum?
 6. List as exhaustively as possible the vocational opportunities unique to your field. Show what the trends are regarding these opportunities and where current information may be obtained.
 7. In a series of role-playing situations practice parent interviews. Then arrange with the local high school to interview some parents. Report these interviews and analyze their strengths and weaknesses.

Chapter 22: *The Teacher in School and Community*

1. Interview the new teachers in the local high school. What special problems do they face? What suggestions do they have for beginning teachers?
2. Identify the special traditions and rituals of the local high school. Compare these with the traditions of your own high school.
3. By interviewing the administrators of the local high school, inquire into expectations of new teachers. For what do administrators look in determining the success of a new teacher? In their opinion what are the marks of an unsuccessful teacher?
4. Arrange to ride on several of the bus routes of a local high school. What do you note about community differences as you ride along the route? (If in a large city follow a group of high school students via a public transportation system.)
5. Obtain permission to attend a faculty meeting and a departmental meeting in a local high school. What group atmosphere do you note? Are relations democratic or authoritarian?
6. Arrange to interview some of the school specialists serving the local high school. Include such personnel as the school nurse, librarian,

counselors, welfare and attendance personnel, curriculum coordinator, audio-visual coordinator, etc. Obtain information regarding services rendered to the school as a whole and to the individual classroom teacher.

7. Visit at least once a representative group of extracurricular activities, for example a club meeting, a dance, a sports event, an assembly, a meeting of the student council, a meeting of the school paper staff, etc. Who participates? Who supervises the activities? Which activities could you learn to supervise? What should you do to prepare yourself?

Chapter 23: *Becoming a Teacher*

1. Write a detailed autobiography. Analyze your teaching potential, your strengths, and your weaknesses.
2. Check your college or university placement office. What kind of a personnel file are you advised to begin? What suggestions does the office make about interviewing for a position? What considerations does the office believe should affect decisions about accepting a position?
3. Write a statement about your plans to continue your education. Describe how you will continue to try to achieve a balance among "know what," "know why," and "know how."

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